# MONARCH

CANADA'S TRANSGENDER READER

## *Ms. Lawyer*
*or*
## Mr. Lawyer

### Features

**RuPaul a Go-Go**

**Shopping Guide**

**How to Create Cleavage**

**Corsets**

**Coming out to my Daughter**

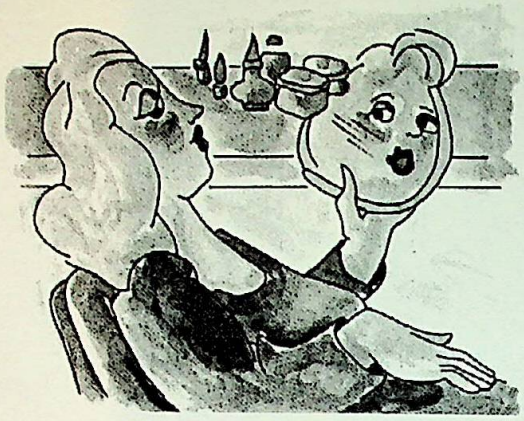
**Tips for Queens**

$10.00

1576

ISSUE 49

Time for a new makeup look...
We look forward to seeing you!

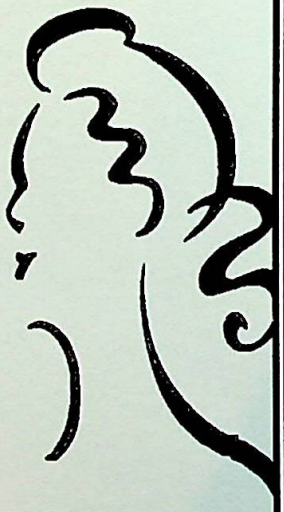


**Services Available:**

* Makeup lessons
* Application for all occasions at your location or ours
* Esthetic Services
* Mail order for all our specialized cosmetic lines

Kirsch Cosmetic Clinic, 257 Eglington Ave.West Toronto Ont. M4R 1B1
Phone: 416 - 487- 4887 open Monday to Saturday

AMOENA'S
NEWEST
LIGHTWEIGHT
BREAST FORM
HAS
WOMAN & MEN
EVERYWHERE
TALKING.



"Light feels right"

"Don't take our word for it come in and see for yourself"
Call today 905-454-5710
Dianne's Mastectomy

AMOENA

## Editor
**Miqqi Alicia**

**Contributing Editors**
**Lynn**
**Donna**
**Glen**
**Claire**

## Publisher
**Cynthia**

## Directors
**President**.....Donna Wells
**Treasurer**.....Victoria
**Secretary**.....Nancy
Shirley, Cynthia, Pam, Lynn,Miqqi,
Allison, Victoria, Danielle, Mellissa

The MONARCH is
published quarterly by

**XPRESSIONS ™**
**P.O Box 223, Station "A"**
**Toronto, Ont. M5W 1B2**
**Voice Mail 416-410-6949**
**Web Site Xpressions@Xpressions.org**

Membership is $50.00 / year, and includes the ***TMR*** and **X-files,** also access to all club services and functions.

This publication is produced and printed by L T Designs ltd. on a MacIntosh Computer using QuarkXpress® and GP200 Canon Printer.


## The Cover
Our sister in Montreal, Michellie.
PAGE SEVEN.

# Contents


Local & International Success 5
**Miqqi Alicia's Editorial**
Charlady's Chatter 6
**Report from President Donna Wells**

## NEWS AND VIEWS
**Smalls**
News from around the TG world 6

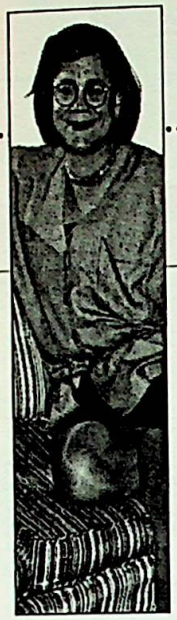
## FEATURES
**Lawyer or Lawyeress?** 7
**Annual General Meeting** 8
**Coming Out to my Daughter** 9
**Canadian Task Force** 10
**Our Incounter with the law** 11
**Tips for Queens** 12
**Sex Change** 14
**Southern Comfort Conference** 15
**NYPD Riot** 19
**Shopping Guide** 20
**Creating Cleavage** 20
**Brandon Teena** 22
**A Brief History of the Corset** 25
**Courage and Transition** 26
**Life in the Passing Lane** 27
**RuPaul a Go - Go** 28
**A Mitzvah in Woodstock** 29
**Euro Court** 30
**Roberts Rules** 31
**Chatsubo** 31
**Deuteronomy** 34



The mention, appearance or likeness of any person or organization in articles or advertising in The Monarch is not to be taken as an identification of the gender, social or political orientation of such persons. The Monarch does not assume responsibility for unsolicited submissions, although they are always welcome. Editorial content is held by TMR. Reproduction in whole or part is forbidden unless with the express permission in writing from the publishers. TMR does not assume responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine, but welcomes comments from anyone dealing with any of the companies for future publication. (TMR) - The Monarch Reader.

# Editorial

Miqqi Alicia Gilbert, Ph.D.



## This issue

You're going to find some very interesting things in this issue, which, we want you to notice, is coming out right on time! First off is our cover story about Xpressions sister Micheline Montreuil. Micheline, our best known member from La Belle Province, has been fighting a one gal battle to get permission to add her femme name to her birth certificate. She is now living full time as a woman, and has recently been invited back to her college teaching position—as Micheline. One result of this court case has been her appearance in Quebec media. The story here has been taken from the Journal de Montreal.

The political theme continues with articles about several other political. Subsequent to the horrendous hate murder of Matthew Sheperd, a gay University of Wyoming student, a peaceful memorial march in New York City resulted in a police riot the likes of which has not been seen since Chicago in the 70s. The event is being hailed as the Second Stonewall, and, as at the original Stonewall, transgendered persons played a very important role. Inside you'll find a report, culled from several observers including transman and transgender warrior Leslie Feinberg.

Many of you know the name Brandon Teena, but many will not. Brandon was brutally murdered for the crime of refusing to live in his birth assigned gender. Though he had been raped and begged for police assistance, it was thought that helping a "freak" was unnecessary. There is a story about Brandon, our own Matthew Sheperd, and the recently released movie about his life and death.

On the lighter side, we have some very interesting reports from the wildly successful Southern Comfort event in Atlanta, a detailed article on how to create cleavage, and an interesting history of the corset. There are also some very interesting articles ranging on topics from religion to coming out to a TG Bat mitzvah. Don't miss Alexis' (a TGC-L member) story about growing up and living intersexed,; a report on the latest theory coming out of the Clarke; an update on the Canadian TG Law Reform Commission. And, of course, your favorite regulars including Claire's Smalls, Lynn's Passing Lane, JoAnne Roberts Chat, and Barbarella's Fetish Corner. And buried in-between all the great stuff are other wonderful little gems we know you'll love.

Next issue is the Golden Anniversary Edition of The Monarch Reader, and we're gearing up to do a special job. We'd love to have your letter or email to include in that issue. So why not send us a card or a note and let us know you're out there.

Miqqi Alicia Gilbert, Editor-in-Chief

As you know, last March Xpressions hosted the IFGE's 12th annual convention. One of my jobs as an organizer for the convention was to help coordinate the speakers' programme, especially the "Canadian Content." I was busily scurrying about trying to find Canadian boyz and galz who had something interesting to say and who could come and say it. In aid of this I put out the word within our community that I was looking for help and suggestions. I received many, and was able to follow through on quite a few.

One suggestion that came to me from Kingston Xpressions member was especially intriguing. Robin suggested that I try to get Keith Norton, the head of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the OHRC. I thought this was a fabulous idea, but that we had as much chance of getting him as a keynote speaker as I had of winning Miss Canada. (It's just that I'm married, you understand.) Nonetheless, I phoned his office and spoke with an assistant of his. The assistant shocked me by listening attentively and expressing interest in the idea. He told me to send a detailed fax, and even coached me on what to include.

Thus began a series of fax and telephone communications that lasted several months. I worked very hard on that first fax communication, carefully explaining who we were and why we so desperately needed attention. I told the commissioner that we were the last closeted group, that we lacked specific protections, that we suffered deep discrimination and were often afraid to speak out and identify ourselves. I told him that we didn't even have a ribbon of our own!

Maybe it was the line about the ribbon, I don't know. But the next thing I did know was that Commissioner Norton's office was contacting me to say that he was planning to come. Now, don't think it was simple after that. There were arrangements, clearances and agreements. Still, in the end, there it was: The Honourable Keith Norton, Commissioner of Human Rights for the Province of Ontario was the Keynote Luncheon speaker at the Friday luncheon of the 12th IFGE Annual Convention.

I knowmany of you missed it, which is a shame, because the talk Commissioner

Norton gave a very interesting one. He began by saying that his first hurdle was that he knew next to nothing about us. It shocked him both as Commissioner of Human Rights and a member of the Gay community that there existed a large group like us about whom he knew nothing. He immediately assigned researchers to provide him with the background he needed. As a result, when he spoke to us he had the beginnings of an understanding of our diverse community.

The second point the Commissioner made was that, as far as his office was concerned, we were protected under the sexual identification sections of the Human Rights legislation. This was very exciting to hear. He stated clearly and loudly that any discrimination in employment or housing would be seen by his office as an instance of discrimination based on sexual choice. Since it is illegal in Ontario to discriminate against someone because they are gay or lesbian, that meant we should be free from discrimination as well.

The final major point of the Commissioner's talk was that, even given that the OHRC thought we were already protected, they would nonetheless begin the process of researching and drafting language to specifically include gender orientation with the Ontario Human Rights code. This was news beyond my wildest imagination. By the time the Honourable Commissioner was finished your Honourable Correspondent was feeling very proud and teary.

Since that afternoon, I have made the acquaintance of the policy analyst now assigned to TG issues. She is communicating with representatives of several TG groups in order to determine just what issues are most important to us, and in September appeared to speak and hear the community at one of our monthly Wednesday night meetings.. Recently, when the conservative Ontario government cut OHIP (Ontario's state medical plan) funding for SRS, our rep wrote to the papers on behalf of the Commissioner arguing that such cuts are unfair and discriminatory.

Of course, as I was explicitly warned, all legislative change moves at a glacial pace. This will upset some people who feel they deserve everything when they want it, but it simply can't be helped. It is extremely rare that legislation moves swiftly, and then it is only with all-party support. But, with perseverance and our continued prodding we can expect Ontario to bring in specific language to protect against discrimination based on gender orientation.

This advance may be thought by some to only be relevant to our transsexual sisters and brothers. Certainly, for someone who is going to live full time as a transwoman or transman, such legislation can mean the difference between a hard and difficult existence and a fair chance to build on the successes one has already achieved. Not being fired, not being kicked out of an apartment, not even being shunted aside until you feel you have to leave your place of employment, means that you can focus on the hurdles you must jump, and not on the ones based on hate and prejudice.

The cross dresser is not left out of this equation. With legislative protection if you are discovered, outted or decide to come out yourself, you know that your job and place you live are protected. It will become your employer's responsibility to see that you have a workplace free of harassment and fear. Your landlord needs to take steps to protect the security of your person and accommodations. If you are spotted in a washroom and are appropriately dressed, then you cannot be thrown out. If you are refused service in a shop, then you have a ground for complaint. All this exists now, but when the language of the legislation is clarified to explicitly include gender orientation, it will even be quotable.

Legislation, of course, can only go so far. No one can legislate love, respect, or even tolerance. So long as the intolerance and disrespect does not show, it can go on and on. For that to change we need to make our presence known and, most of all, to become more public, more visible, more part of the everyday lives of the people around us. Those of us able to need to normalize transgenderism, we need to desensitize the population so that we are not viewed as freaks, not seen as weird exceptions to the norm. More than anything, we need to stand together and realize that all of us are in the fight together. Cross dressers, MtF, FtM, drag kings and queens, the intersexed, the hyper-butch and male-femme all need to stand proud and use the legal means we have to fight to make ourselves known.

Laws are good and we absolutely need them. But we also need each other. And we also need people who are out so that straights must say: Oh, yeah, I know a cross dresser—he's an all right guy; Sure, there's a gal in my office used to be a guy, does her job pretty good; Uh, huh, my neighbour used to be a woman. Coulda blowed me away, but he keeps his walk clear in the winter, so what's it to me?

When everyone says, "What's it to me? I could care less," then we'll know we can forget about laws, and that we have arrived. I don't think I'll live to see that day, but in the meantime, I'll help as much as I can to bring it about. Will you?

# Smalls

**Mike Knifes TSs**

Ontario's Progressive Conservative government has delisted Sex Reassignment Surgery, which means that Ontarians must now fund SRS privately. "We feel it is not a medically necessary operation and public tax dollars could be better spent elsewhere," a senior government official said.

Conservative MPPs Marcel Beaubien and Frank Sheehan had been lobbying for an end to public funding for what they call "lifestyle" operations. "I think we have a lot more pressing priorities," Beaubien said.

Last year, OHIP spent CDN $122,000 on eight approved sex reassignments.

*[Ottawa Sun - 10/3/98]*

**Police Outing**

A transsexual from Denmark is suing the police for outing her to friends. According to Natascha Nielsen, a TS from Lolland, police officers told one of Natascha's friends in "quite clear language" that the friend "just ought to know that [Natascha] really was a man."

The friend, Dorthe Krell had called the police because Natascha had disappeared from her house for a few days after a domestic fight; Dorthe was concerned that something bad had happened.

[GAIN News - 6/27/98]

**New Orleans Ordinance**

The New Orleans City Council voted 5-1 in favor of an

Donna Wells

# The Charlady

I take the chair of Xpression's with great pride and look forward to serving as your president, or 'Char-Lady' and to the challenges of 1999.

As we look back to the year of 1998, Xpression's will always be remembered by our community as the Canadian organization who put Toronto on the map with the 'CROSSING-BORDERS' convention in March 98. The convention was a fantastic success thanks to a lot of hard work by our organization and specifically to your past 'Char-Lady', Miqqi Gilbert, who worked tirelessly for months setting up the work-shops and educational seminars.

Hats off to: Lynn, who sold all the programme advertising, plus helped in the backfield, Mellissa who arranged and organized the vendor area, Cynthia who burned the mid-night oil to get the artwork designed and printing done in the short deadlines she was given, to Pamela Geddes who made it happen and brought the convention to Toronto, and many thanks to all the other who helped and supported this convention.

The Xpression's organization has come a long way in a very short time,

but the future still offers vast opportunities for:-

- Membership growth,
- Increasing magazine advertising & sales,
- Launching a full 'Big-Sister' support programme,
- 'Out-Reach' by building community awareness
- Long-Term Planning for eventually having our own facility and club house
- Refreshing our club events: the Spring Fling, the Fall Fling & our Christmas party.
- To bring you, our members more support, improved communication and a club that you can be really proud of!

Working with the new executive and 'Board of Directors' one of the first undertaking was a 'New-Ideas & 'Brain-Storming' session held on November 29, 1998 to shake-out those new ideas, stimulate thoughts and begin to plan and 'put-down-the-footings' for the year of 99.

We will need new volunteers for some of the new programmes and especially a number of new 'Big-Sisters' for the 'Big-Sister Programme', so for those interested please telephone the Xpression's number and leave us your name and contact number, times we can call, etc.

Any ideas, or suggestions you may have please drop me a note via the club P.O. box, the club telephone number, or e-mail me at the club e-mail address. I will answer all responses.

In closing, from all of us to all of you have a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year and keep it safe! All the very best in the coming year!

# Lawyer or Lawyeress

## The Lawyer who wants to be a Lawyeress

*Xpressions member Micheline is currently embroiled in a legal battler to legally add her feminine name to her birth certificate. After many run arounds and conflicting statements Micheline decided she had to go to court. As a result, she has appeared on the cover of several newspapers and been interviewed for radio and television numerous times. The following article appeared in the large circulation newspapers Journal de Montreal and journal de Quebec.*

*By Michel DuFour, Le Journal de Montreal*

"I am a normal woman born in the body of a man. A male lawyer who wants to be a female lawyer. I am as normal a woman as any other. The only difference is that I was born in the body of a man. I am neither homosexual nor perverted. I feel like a woman, and I want to live who I am."

Micheline Montreuil did not really wish to come out from the shadows. It was over a dispute with the Civil Registry Office concerning the legal recognition of his feminine name that has thrust him into the public eye. Micheline Montreuil, his feminine name, addressed the Superior Court on Monday to have his name on his Birth Certificate changed. Micheline stated that she had used her first name, Micheline , since she was 12 years old.

Ms. Montreuil wishes to add the first name "Micheline" to those names already inscribed on his birth certificate, but does not want his legal gender changed.

A Question of Gender

Ms. Marie Rinfret, lawyer for the Director of the Registry Office states that it is in the custom and tradition of Quebec that a person's first name is either masculine or feminine. The civil law permits a change when a person has successfully undergone all the steps of a complete sex reassignment.

"Coming out of the closet was not easy, especially for my spouse, owing to the need to confront prejudices she encounters everyday. But I think I am in a good position to explain the situation to the general public," said Micheline.

Mockery and Prejudice

Many transsexual people are poor and without resources. They are without resources. They are also very vulnerable to the prejudice and mockery of the public. With his status as a lawyer, Micheline Montreuil feels better placed to fight the prejudice and mockery, and, in particular, overcome the legal barriers that can present themselves along the way to others like herself.

"It's a question of the personal freedom of choice that one must respect. I know it's not easy. One day my sister said to me, 'I might disagree with your choice, but the first person that speaks out against you – I'll punch out!' On the train between Montreal and Toronto I was chatting with some women when a man approached. He said that I would never be a man and I would never be a woman either. Everyone laughed … and then I realized that they were laughing at him, not at me."

# Smalls....

ordinance that will provide protection from intimidation and discrimination based upon "gender identification." By doing so, New Orleans becomes the first city in the Deep South to enact such legislation.

*[GAIN News - 7/3/98]*

**Friend or Foe?**

TheLogCabin Republican announced that Ward Connerly will be presented with its Spirit of Lincoln Award for his support of same-sex domestic partnership benefits. In a letter to Log Cabin executive director Rich Tafel, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director Kerry Lobel urged Tafel to reconsider the choice of Connerly.

Connerlyled Californials Proposition 209, which was passed by voters in 1996. Prop 209 effectively dismantled all affirmative action programs in the state. Many civil rights groups charged Connerlys campaign as a campaign of intentional misinformation and deception. Connerly has since spearheaded similar efforts in a number of other states.

"Mr. Connerly's support of domestic partnership for same-sex couples does not mollify me. Domestic partner benefits are of little value to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) people of color who cannot get a job or admission to a university where such benefits are offered," said Lobel.

"To applaud those who would grant us rights while they actively strip civil rights away from others is to buttress

# Smalls....

the divide and conquer strategy of our enemies," she added.

Lobel further stated, "The gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender movement often calls on our allies to support our cause for equality. For reasons of conscience and reciprocity, we have a responsibility to honor the cause for equality of our allies."

In response, Tafel said, "We honor the rich diversity of opinion in the gay and lesbian movement, and in that spirit we respect NGLTF's views on Proposition 209. We are a big enough community for disagreement and diversity, and our organizations have a fundamental disagreement on this particular issue. Log Cabin believes that individual merit must be the sole criterion by which all Americans are to be judged, and that race, gender and sexual orientation must never be a basis by which Americans are judged in the workplace or in any other sector of society."

[GAIN News - 7/3/98 and 7/11/98]

**En Guard**

Transsexual woman Laury Weaver, a Major in the Tennessee Army National Guard (NG), has filed a lawsuit against the Guard alleging sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

Weaver, a decorated veteran with 28 years of active and reserve experience in the Guard, alleges that, from August 1997 to June 1998, she has been subjected to continuous harassment and has been denied work from active duty assignments.

She is beginning her tran-

# AGM

## Xpressions Holds 1998 Annual General Meeting

*By Miqqi Alicia Gilbert, Outgoing Charlady*

*Thirty-five Xpressions members gathered together on Sunday 15 November at the 519 Community Centre to hold the club's fourth Annual General Meeting. It was four years ago in the same location on Sunday Nov 5 1995 at 2 p.m. that the first AGM was held. At that time Xpressions formally came into existence and elected its first board of directors.*

*There were about a dozen of us crowded around a table trying to find a way to create a club that could bring us into the 21st century. The foundations would be open-ness and activity. We wanted to form a club that offered a range of happenings from meetings to dinners to shopping trips, and that encouraged members to be out in public. We would accomplish this by finding safe venues, offering support and supervision, and reaching out to all members of our community.*

*I think we have accomplished our goals. Well more then half of 110 members attend one or more club functions, many on a regular basis. The Wednesday night meetings, our new 1998 initiative, provide a new way for members and all the TG community to gather, discuss issues, have fun, and socialize. Our Christmas dinner is expected to be host to more than one half of our members, and our monthly dinners regularly have over 30 gals and their partners.*

*Members at the AGM heard reports from our treasurer who delighted us by announcing that we are doing very well with money in the bank. In fact, we were proud to be able to present Helen Rykens, Office Manager of the 519, with a donation of $300. This money goes to support all of the programmes of the 519 including the Sunday Outreach breakfast which feeds over 100 needy citizens.*

*Other directors reported on their areas of responsibility including Shirley who is mother hen of the W3 programmes, Lynn who is responsible for dinners, and Cynthia who is our publisher. Danielle who is in charge of membership and the ad hoc committee on change rooms reported that the prospective arrangement for changing with the hair dresser above Mango's fell through with the arrival of a new owner. We're back to square one, but we're already investigating a suggestion from member Lynda of Absolutely Fabulous that she might be able to provide a change room service.*

*Shirley reported that 18 members attended Divine Lake this year, and it was considered a wonderful success by all. Absent board member Pamela reported in abstentia that since Niagara-on-the-Lake has priced itself out of our market, we're looking to Niagara Falls for our Spring Fling. Negotiations are currently proceeding with several hotels. So, think Casino in the Spring!*

*I reported, along with Cynthia, that a number of personal circumstances resulted in our being one TMR issue short this year. We regretted the occurrence, but it could not really be helped. We're determined that '99 will see us right on schedule.*

*Finally, as outgoing Charlady, a said a few words about our lives and how they are changing in these modern times. So many of us are no longer willing to be classified in simplistic terms as a "cross dresser" or "transvestite." Many of our members are unwilling to accept the medicalized pigeon-holes created in a time when there was no transgender consciousness, no sense of community and belonging. Those times are changing, and the majority of us want to connect to the larger TG world and begin to create our own categories and identities. (I have promised that I will write out the speech for the next TMR.)*

*The pictures accompanying this article show the board and membership, and also some the board members at The Mango after the meeting. The Mango (580 Church St. 922-6525), just across the street and up a bit from the 519, has truly become our home away from home. You can always go there, be welcomed warmly and stand a good chance of running into some sisters. And that's where the AGM went after adjournment for well deserved refreshment and fun. If you weren't there, I can promise you that you were missed.*

# COMING OUT TO MY DAUGHTER

By Donna Wells

Telling my children about my cross dressing was something I had not planned on. I believe in 'a-need-to-know' philosophy and I was confident that there would never be any reason for them to know about my cross dressing.

Well, a situation happened and rather than risk my daughter possibly hearing about my cross dressing from someone else, I wanted to tell her myself. Firstl, I believed it was better for her to hear it directly from me, and secondly, I wanted the opportunity to explain it to her correctly, having a better understanding of it, than other potential sources.

I chose one of our regular evenings together and so we sat down before dinner to have the talk. I began by asking her if she knew anything about cross dressing, or if she had ever heard of it. She was aware of it, like most people and seemed to have no strong feelings either way about it. I moved forward and told her I was a cross dresser. I explained that it was something I was born with and from as far back as I could remember, I had enjoyed women's clothing. The design, the softness, the feel, simply everything about the female wardrobe had always fascinated me. I clarified the fact that I was not gay, nor did I have any gay tendencies. I simply loved wearing female clothing and I love women. We discussed the fact that one can simply enjoy cross dressing and that it is not a beginning, which leads to transsexual interests, becoming gay, or a desire to go all the way, have the operation and live as a women.

I explained cross dressing as being like a continuum, with the person who enjoys masquerading at one end and way down at the other end, the individual who wishes to go all the way, i.e. hormones, the operation and live as a woman the rest of her life. As one moves along the continuum from the masquerader, next may be the person who enjoys wearing female panties and/or panty hose, occasionally, or under his business suit, followed next perhaps by someone who cross dresses once, or twice monthly. This may be followed by someone who dresses a few times a week, followed by perhaps one who dresses at every opportunity and may desire to live as a women, if they could do it. Moving down the continuum further, next may be a person who dresses female all the time and may even works, full time as a women. This individual would likely be on hormones and be working with the Clarke Institute (if in Ontario), with the goal of having the operation. Among the examples above, are the many other variations of cross dressing.

At various times through our discussion, I re-affirmed some of the above points depending on my daughter's reaction. I finished up by quoting Ru paul, 'We are all born naked, everything else is drag!'

She paused, smiled and turned to me and said, "Dad, I don't care what you're into. You're my father and I love you!"

She threw her arms around my neck and kissed me. We both shed a few tears. She turned to me again, looked me in the eyes and said, "You know, cross dressing is no big deal anyway. You're still the same person you always were and I will always love you."

My daughter is twenty-four (24) years old, for those of you who may have the question in your minds. They experts say that the best time to tell your children is when they are between seven to twelve, or wait until they are in their twenties. Evidently, the teenage years, when they are going through that stage of maturity, should be avoided.

Looking back at my concern in telling my daughter about my cross dressing was not to be feared at all. She accepted it as 'no-big-deal.' What's new and exciting now is that I can share the 'femme' part of my life with my daughter too.

# Smalls....

sition, but is still performing her military job as a man.

[GAIN News - 7/8/98]

**Obituary**

Transgendered activist JoAnna McNamara took her own life. JoAnna was an attorney who, shortly after graduating from Willamette University Law School in 1996, wrote the brief that resulted in the BOLI decision which currently protects transsexual men and women from discrimination under Oregon's state disability law.

JoAnna also served as Employment Law Moderator for the Transgender Law Conference (ICTLEP) and helped to co-found It's Time, Oregon!

[GAIN News - 7/8/98]

**Another John/Joan Case**

In a case that resembles the "John/Joan" study last year at Johns Hopkins, a Canadian male infant, whose penis was irreparably damaged during circumcision, was surgically reassigned as a female and has successfully adapted to life as a woman. Now 27, the unnamed woman describes herself as bisexual and, as of last summer, was in a relationship with a woman.

The findings in this case, published in the July issue of the Journal of Pediatrics, seem to contradict those of the Hopkins study, in which a male was surgically reassigned as a female because of a similar circumcision accident, but could not adapt to life as a female. "John/Joan" rebelled against his female socialization and began living as a male at age 16, leading some observers to

# Smalls....

conclude that gender identity is set at birth.

The significant difference between the two cases is when the sex reassignment was performed: at 21 months in John/Joan's case and at 7 months in this case. The results of this case have led researchers to speculate that there may be a "window of time" after birth before gender identity is realized.

*[Globe and Mail - 7/7/98]*

**Lobster-brained**

And Illinois-based gay rights group has criticized an attempt by Red Lobster restaurants to have the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance declared unconstitutional. The gay group threatened to mount a "public awareness and education campaign" against the restaurants.

"That a national restaurant chain would seek to overturn civil rights legislation is as unconscionable as it is disgusting," said Rick Garcia, director of the Illinois Federation For Human Rights. "We will not stand idly by when anyone attempts to undo the hard fought gains made by civil rights activists in Cook County."

[GAIN News - 7/15/98]

Good News, For a "Change"

Wayne Wilhelmi, a performing arts teacher in the Red Bluff High School, informed concerned parents of the teacher's intent to transition and begin living as a woman.

Although some parents suggested Wilhelmi either resign or be fired, neither is likely to happen. Wilhelmi is

## Canadian Task Force For Transgender Law Reform

*Lynn Lefevre*

*Hello everyone! I am on the board of the recently formed Canadian Task Force For Transgender Law Reform. I thought it would be a good idea to let everyone know what we were doing. This message describes our goals. A followup message will detail our recent meeting with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.*

*The task force is composed of a select group of individuals who have come together to enact changes in both Provincial and Federal Human Rights Codes.*

*To many of you still "in the closet" you may not see the relevance of what we are doing. However, at some point should you emerge from "the closet" something as simple as which washroom to use legally while en femme may be an issue to you. Someone who may wish to transition in the workplace without harassment will benefit from the work we are doing.*

*The purpose of the Canadian Task Force for Transgendered Law Reform is to use legislative reform or any other appropriate jurisdictional means to facilitate the acceptance of Transgendered people in Canadian Society, to safeguard their basic rights and freedoms and to define and protect their needs.*

*We hope to provide laws, regulations and guidelines which safeguard the Transgendered and which demonstrates the resolve of the nations leaders to accept us into society. In doing so we will help to eliminate guilt, shame and fear from the lives of Transgendered people and replace these with safety, pride and acceptance.*

*Some of the issues that we intend to tackle include, but are not limited*

- *v Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms*
- *v Freedom of Gender Expression,*
- *v Freedom of Movement, T*
- *v herapeutic Care,*
- *v The Right to Enter into Marriage,*
- *v The Right to Parent Children,*
- *v The Right to Appropriate Health Care,*
- *v The Right of Gender Declaration,*
- *v The Right of Self Governance.*

*If you would like to become involved in the Task Force or you would like further information (your confidentiality will be maintained), I would invite you to contact us at: ctftlr@geocities.com or visit our web site at : http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Stonewall/8860*

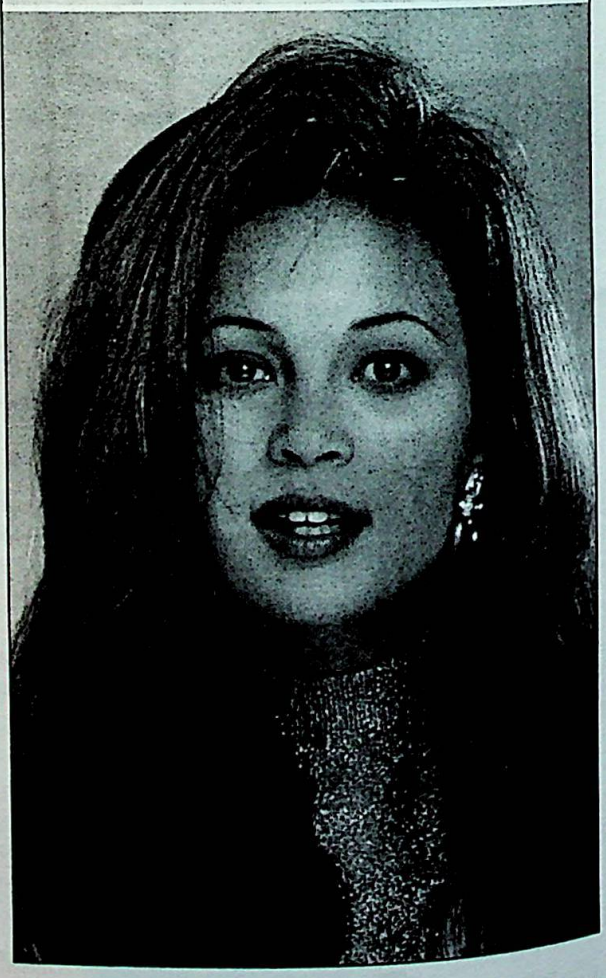

Truly You Wig Boutique

Amalia Ruggiero, Certified Wig Technician & Image Consultant

(905) 821-1092.

Winchester Place
154 Queen St. South Unit 112
Mississauga, On.
L5M 2P4

At Truly You Wig Boutique, we provide the ultimate level of professional service. Over time we learned to be very sensitive to everybody's own particular personal needs. Henceforth, we provide our services in private rooms in complete privacy and comfort. Unlike other places where you are left alone to choose your wig, we sit you down and together select the style, colour and fit that is right for you and provide you with various wig maintenance hints.

# OUR ENCOUNTER WITH THE LAW!

*By Gigi Trew*

It was 12:20 AM on September 17, 1998 and my wife and I were on our way home to Collingwood, Ontario. Just four hours previously, we had attended one of the most interesting meetings of my life. This was the Xpressions monthly Wednesday night meeting, which highlighted an Ontario Government official from the Human Rights Commission, who asked the Xpression's members and guests what their concerns were in dealing with our lives when dressed enfemme, in public. One of the questions put forth had to do with using the women's washroom when dressed enfemme.

As I recall, only one transgendered sister had ever been arrested when using a woman's washroom and this did not happen in Ontario. The question raised had been an offshoot of when dressed, which washroom should we use? For safety reasons, it was felt that the women's washroom was the correct answer, but that it had never been tested yet in a Canadian court of law.

I had dressed enfemme at home, driven to Toronto as such, attended the Xpression's meeting and my wife and I were returning to our Collingwood home. It was a beautiful evening and in another ten minutes we would be home in bed. Around the next corner, the night suddenly took on a threatening dimension. Ahead were three O.P.P. police cruisers and an officer with a red light waving me down.

"Think cool, Gigi" I thought. This was only one of those routine 'R-I-D-E' spot checks. Sure! But, the only problem was I was dressed in a lovely female dress-suit, pantyhose, full makeup and my favourite wig!

Gently I eased off the gas pedal, showing no signs of hesitation. I had not been drinking and our seat belts were on. These guys had an important job to do, which was getting a bunch of drunks off of the highways and I am in support of that. The problem was that I am so easily read! Window down, I brought the vehicle to a smooth controlled stop.

The officer bent down at my window and said, "Good evening ladies." My wife was fast a sleep while the officer shone the flashlight in the car and checked our seat belts, our faces and smelled my breath. A sudden quick smile flickered on the officer when the light struck my face.

"Have you had anything to drink this night?" he asked.

"No, we have not had a drink tonight," I replied. This was not the time to try out a feminine voice.

"Thank you ladies. Have a good morning," the officer said and we were on our way. Looking in the rear-view mirror, more than one officer was taking an interest in, I believe, my licences plate number. However, nothing more has come of it. So what if that officer had asked me for my licence? It sure does not have a picture of Gigi on it?

Well sisters, I have a small security blanket by way of a card issued by 'T-O-P-S'. T-O-P-S is 'Transgendered Officers Protect/Serve', which provides a service in the USA by issuing a laminated card that shows my male driver's licence picture beside a picture of Gigi, with both names, along with my home address. We do not have this service in Canada as far as I know, so what should a gal do?

I also belong to a 'TriEss' chat group (for transgendered and other half only) and I told them of this experience too and suggested how important it was to me to have ID that proves who I was. A suggestion from one of our TriEss sisters, besides the 'TOPS' card, was to go to the driver's vehicle permit office and get a picture of yourself enfemme, but with your real name shown on it. This may not be accepted in every Province, but it is an excellent suggestion. Another idea mentioned was to take a colour copy of your driver licence and laminate it to the other side of a picture of you enfemme, with your femme name and a note that you are transgendered.

A very important comment from our TriEss sisters was that any time they have even been stopped by the police the officers have always conducted themselves in a very courteous and professional manner and they have never had any problem encounters. Remember, common sense tells us that when dealing with the police, one should always conducted themselves in a courteous manner, be honest and answer any questions as clearly and accurately as possible. For transsexuals, under professional care, reference can perhaps be made to the specialist. The point that any other information, which would confirm that your intentions are the most honourable may all be helpful.

My sincerest wishes are that if you have any encounters with the law that they go as smoothly as mine.

Have a safe journey in all your travels.

# *Smalls....*

committed to staying, and "the district has no legal basis to take any action on this matter," said Acting Superintendent Wes Combes. Some parents have threatened to pull their children from Wilhelmi's classes, while others consider him to be a good role model.

An editorial, in the Red Bluff Daily News, was generally supportive of Wilhelmi, describing him as "an outstanding instructor, even among some of those he has now appalled. He has displayed rare talent for bringing out the best in young adults interested in the performing arts."

[GAIN News - 7/22/98]

**Dance the Night Away**

The Working group Dancing Gay Games has reversed an earlier decision which read, in part, "Transvestitism is not appreciated."

They would now like to make it clear that they do not consider transvestitism as a starting point for a dress code in a dance competition for same sex partners although a transvestite dance couple, that wishes to take part in the competition, will neither be refused nor disqualified, nor will they be marked any differently to other couples."

[GAIN News - 7/25/98]

**Euro Case Lost**

Two transsexuals who were born male and underwent sex-change operations in their forties lost a long battle yesterday to be recognized in English law as women.

The European Court of

# Smalls....

Human Rights ruled that the Government had not breached the rights of the two transsexuals by denying them new birth certificates showing that they were female. The court also upheld, by 18 votes to two, the Government's right to prevent them from marrying men. It ruled that marriage may legitimately be restricted under national laws to a union between a man and a woman "of biological origin".

But the 20 judges who decided the case reprimanded the Government for not reviewing national laws on transsexuals as the court had advised after a previous case in 1990.

[GAIN News - 8/1/98]

**Phelps Phails**

A GLBT-positive church has successfully outprotested the protest-King. Anti-gay extremist, Reverend Phelps of Kansas arrived in the Twin Cities this past weekend with 20 congregates to picket the church with a message, "God hates Fags". Unfortunately, Rev. Phelps underestimated All God's Children Metropolitan Community Church and the Twin Cities as over 1,000 people gathered at the church on Sunday morning to attend a counter rally, stating "Minnesota says No to Hate". Crowds gathered on the steps of the church spilling out on the lawns and into the streets. The crowds burst into applause as the Attorney General of the State, Skip Humphrey, and 3

# Tips.....

By Ms. Glorya

## Whole The Girl With Something Extra

Are you a transvestite, a drag queen, a transgender woman, or a genetic woman looking for some sexy secrets about sexual illusion? This is for you. Ask yourself if you are a Lady, a Slut, or a Goddess. Every drag queen, transvestite, woman and transgender woman has an alter ego, what is yours? Often we are a combination of all three, or we need to express one of these sides on certain evenings. There is a true way to be tasteful and there is a way to be tacky. Tacky may be funny, but only if you really intend to be funny, otherwise you're going to come off looking like a fool.

## How Does A True Lady Exit A Car?

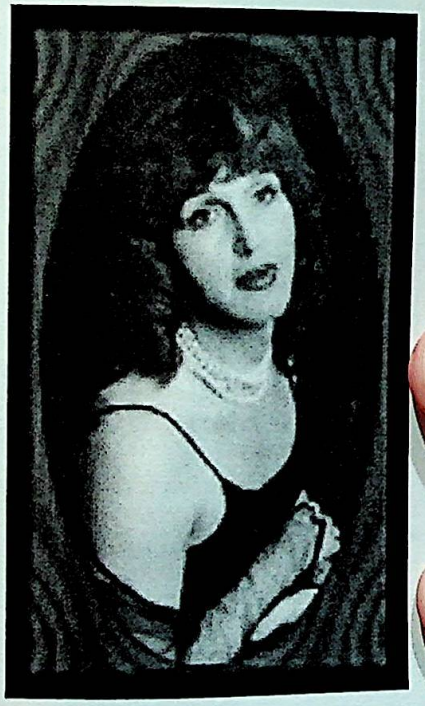
There is such a thing called a charm school exit. Always exit by placing both legs out of the car door, keeping your ankles together and placing them firmly on the ground, standing up gracefully. Never exit one leg at a time, only a tramp, or a cow makes a sloppy exit. A lady is never vulgar!

## Panty Hose And Lingerie Secrets

Before wearing lingerie you must first shave your body, unless you want to be a complete gender fuck. Married transvestites who are closeted can buy sheer body stockings that camouflage body hair. If this is your quandary, then by all means, buy the body stocking. You can purchase these at most dance wear stores, or through certain catalogues such as FREDERICK'S OF HOLLYWOOD, where you can find the most bitchen looking fetish lingerie.Two, or more pairs of pantyhose will also make your legs look great.

Always wear sheer to the waist pantyhose when wearing ultra short mini skirts and hot pants. This will give you an even look all the way up to your crotch. Keep in mind that most pantyhose have a demarcated area, resembling a pair of shorts. The sheerness breaks at the upper thigh. Such hose will look horrible if your dress is too short.

Always tuck your penis properly. You have to shove your testes back up inside your body, then place your penis between your legs, with it's tip facing your anus. You need not tape your penis there, you can



firmly secure it with a tight dance belt. Be sure it's not too tight around your waist, or you'll have additional agony. If your attempting to father a child anytime soon, then forget tucking and wear looser fitting dresses, or pants. Tucking will lower your sperm count, since body heat sterilizes the production of sperm. Most men are really drawn to you because you're a girl with something extra! Still, tucking is necessary when you1re wearing tight gowns, dresses, pants, or skirts.

Apply pantyhose by carefully unfolding each leg. Begin with one foot at a time, then the next. Pull each leg up by gradually unfolding the hose over each shin, then knee, up to your thighs. Alternate between legs so that your hose are not uneven, this also keeps them from running.

Spray your freshly applied pantyhose with cheap hair spray, they'll be a lot more run proof. And void placing sharp objects, purses, jewelry, etc. against your hose as these things can easily snag and run them. Nothing is worse than being all ready to go out and having your pantyhose run. Running your nylons makes you look like a cheap gutter snipe. If you're feeling particularly whorish, then by all means, wear runny nylons. Used nylons make great sexy bondage ropes. Tying your man's hands behind his back with nylons, or tying him spread-eagle to your bed posts with nylons can be very exciting. Nylons are flimsy and not that strong, they just give the illusion of restraint and this is very hot for most powerful stud muffins who need to shed some of that daily control.

## Bras Corsets And Waste Cinchers

To get proper cleavage one must either tape, or wear a bra that's two sizes too small. The cup size should always be the same size as the boob you want. Your boobs can never be too big. Big boobs are powerful assets, especially when attracting men.

Taping can be irritating and can prove a nightmare if your allergic to adhesive, like I am. Taping is done by most beauty queens at pageants, according to my drag godmother who was a former Miss USO and Miss New York City. When taping, one must bend forward and push everything up and to the center. If you have a lot of body fat, or if you're weight challenged, you can achieve great looking cleavage. I personally recommend the double bra trick. Use the smaller bra on the inside and stuff the larger, outer bra.

Corsets are great, but tricky. Most women have wider hips, so most drag queen corsets must be tailored tighter at the waist. It helps if you have the breast forms sewed inside the cup of the corset. The foam mastectomy replacement pads are the best for such a corset. The expensive silicone forms are more useful as bra fill.

One can use heavy duty water balloons in bras for a more bouncy feel, but your taking a chance that one might explode and leave you not only feeling flat, but quite wet and embarrassed!

Waste cinchers do give you a wasp waste and can really pull a svelte look together. Remember drag is illusion, just as sexiness is illusion. If it weren't for peroxide, silicone, collagen, enamel and synthetic hair, we wouldn't have a Hollywood as we know it!

## The Secret To Great Make Up

Are you a Goddess, Slut, or a Lady? Well this is how you gauge your make up application. A Lady is tasteful and never overdone. She coordinates her colors properly and always appears classy. She usually knows if she's a spring, summer, autumn, or winter. These are the main color groups based on skin, hair and eye color tones, no matter how fair, or dark and lovely you are. Cool colors lean towards blues, blue violets and greens. Warm colors lean towards reds, yellows, peaches, pinks and red violets.

Always blend, blend, blend to have really great make up.

Never use too many colors of eye shadow, unless your going for the slut look. Never share eye, or any make up as bacteria and infections can be spread easily, especially to the eyes. Share your eyeliner and mascara with the wrong queen and you'll get a wicked case of conjunctivitis, better known as pink eye.

[Visit Glorya's web site at http://www.qman.com/glorya/index.html.]

# Smalls....

other candidates for governor lead a procession of numerous State Senators, State Representatives, and city and government officials into the sanctuary. Pastors from area churches stopped to joined the 9:30 am counter rally, as they were enroute to their own worship services. An ecumenical group of representatives from religious groups, Civil rights organizations, GLBT organizations, heterosexual and homosexual groups, numbering over 100 all joined together in an overwhelming spirit of unity.

There were no acts of violence and no one was arrested. The Twin Cities community honored the request of Rev. Paul Graetz, and the church that this rally be an act of love and affirmation of God's inclusive love for all. AGCMCC had groups praying on the church steps as the crowds gathered, bottle water and packaged snacks were available for Rev. Phelps' group as gifts of love.

[GAIN News 8/1/98]

**Everything on the 'Net**

A Florida company says it plans to broadcast a sex-change operation, live on the Internet. According to Jonathan Ogden, of Calypso Productions Int Inc., the company's Calypso Health division plans to broadcast, in November, a six hour male-to-female sex reassignment surgery (SRS).

[GAIN News - 8/5/98]

# Smalls....

### Stroke

IFGE founder Merissa Sherrill Lynn suffered a non-fatal stroke at the beginning of July which left her partially paralyzed on her right side.

[GAIN News - 8/5/98]

### Defensive Maneuver

Canadian Defense Minister Art Eggleton has approved a soldier's request to become a woman, and ordered the armed forces to pay for the sex change operation. The request was approved quietly earlier this week, on the recommendation of senior medical and personnel officers, thus setting a precedent under the defense department's medical plan. Previously, defense officials had rejected the request, recommending that the transsexual, who prefers to remain anonymous, quit the armed forces to have the sex reassignment surgery.

According to a spokesperson, since provincial health plans pay for SRS, defense officials felt they could not reject the request.

The approval has not escaped criticism. Reform MP Leon Benoit criticized the decision as "not acceptable," stating that "I have case after case of deserving people who are being denied pensions, health care and compensation from the Department of National Defense. And now the minister has the gall to approve thousands of dollars for a sex change operation."

[GAIN News - 8/5/98]

# Sex Change....

## SEX CHANGE THEORIES SHAKEN BY BOY RAISED AS GIRL

A boy surgically altered and raised as a girl after his penis was burned off as an infant rebelled and became a man, researchers said Thursday, casting doubt on long-held medical theories that gender can be "reassigned" after birth.

The unidentified man, now in his 20s, was the basis in the past two decades for most theories of "sex reassignment"—the approach surgeons take when male genitals are badly mutilated at birth. But in a lengthy report in the March issue of the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, researchers reported the man called "John" was now married and that those theories were questionable. The case first appeared in medical literature in 1972 after the boy, at eight months, lost his penis during an attempted cauterizing repair. It was "accidentally burned to ablation," the report said. He was studied at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore where, according to accepted theory, it was decided to surgically alter him and raise him as "Joan," a girl, alongside his twin brother, a normal boy. He had been castrated and preliminary surgery followed. At first it seemed to work. In 1973 Time Magazine said the oft-cited case "provides strong support ... that conventional patterns of masculine and feminine behavior can be altered. It also casts doubt on the theory that major sex differences, psychological as well as anatomical, are immutably set by the genes at conception."

But the newly published report said: "The evidence seems overwhelming that normal humans are not psychosexually neutral at birth but are, in keeping with their mammalian heritage, predisposed and biased to interact with environmental, familial, and social forces in either a male or female mode."

The new report was written by Milton Diamond of the John A. Burns School of Medicine in Honolulu and H. Keith Sigmundson of the Ministry of Health, Victoria, B.C.

Sigmundson once headed a psychiatric team that handled the case, and Diamond at one point was a consultant for the British Broadcasting Corporation which investigated the case several years ago.

Their study said the boy had trouble from the start. His mother reported "Joan" rebelled at wearing dresses, preferred his brother's toys to dolls, tried to urinate standing up, liked to play soldier and went for rough and tumble games.

Between the ages of nine and 11, the study said, "Joan" realized she was male. At age 12 "Joan" rejected estrogen therapy designed for feminization. At the age of 14 "Joan" decided to become "John," undergoing a mastectomy and phallus construction in the next two years. At 16 he obtained a windowless van with a bed and bar. Girls had crushes on him and at 25 he married a woman several years his senior, adopting her children.

"Coitus is occasional with his wife ... sufficient for his needs but is less than his wife would desire," the study said. "John can have coital orgasm and ejaculation" but resents that castration deprived him of fatherhood.

The researchers said they believe the case shows that any male child with a normal nervous system "should be raised as a male" and that genital surgery, however difficult, should be conducted to assure that is possible.

# Southern Comfort: A Transgendered Pilgrimage

By Ms. Glorya

When I returned from Southern Comfort, my wife asked if I had had a good time. I told her that I had indeed had fun, but that going to Southern Comfort was much more significant that merely having a "good time." "How d'you mean?" she asked. "For me," I explained, "my first Southern Comfort was an almost mystical confirmation of my transgendered status. Every time I return, I feel as if I reaffirm that status. Think of it as a ritual of affirmation." "Like going to church?" she prompted. "In a sense," I told her. "But more like going to Canterbury, Jerusalem or Mecca. Southern Comfort should be a required pilgrimage for every transgenderist." "You mean for every transgenderist who can afford it," she quipped.

"Most significant experiences cost something," I responded, "Everyone who is serious about transgenderism owes it to herself to experience at least one Southern Comfort."

"We'll have to put that in the TG contract," said my loving and supportive but kind of smart aleck wife as she helped me unpack. "The world would be a lot better off if everyone went to at least one gender convention," I said. "It's like pilgrimage and pilgrimage is good for the soul." "I'll see if I can find a habit for you to wear next year," the Littler Woman muttered while throwing my hip enhancers in the dirty clothes.

Southern Comfort as pilgrimage? Well, it certainly has some of the obvious elements: travel, ritual and the expectation of the miraculous. It even has penance if you think of the burdensome aspects of travel as penitential acts. And as for ritual, who knows more about private ceremonies than a TG? One of the first things I do at a gender convention is probably what most attendees do: take a perfumed bubble bath and shave the legs. With 400-500 people performing similar ablutions, you've got quite a sudsy baptism going on. Then comes the ritualistic painting of the face and donning all the accoutrements unique to our particular persuasion. And, of course, there are the miracles.

Like invalids tossing away crutches at a holy shrine, pilgrims at Southern Comfort toss aside incapacitating shame and discover they can walk – in heels, dressed the way they've always wanted, proud and tall.

Pilgrimage shrines produce transformative experiences and, needless to say, there are lots of mystical transformations at Southern Comfort (besides the magical makeovers by Jim Bridges). Eyes sparkle and laughter comes easy. Excitement and expectation are in the air. Southern Comfort even transformed the complex in which it took place. Atlanta's Buckhead is a posh convention area, certainly a center of social acceptance. But during Southern Comfort, that center became charged with a special energy supplied by the people who came to celebrate something which normally would keep them from social acceptance. 500 different people sharing something so special in the same place transformed the celebration into a grand rite and changed the convention center into a sacred space.

However, living in a sacred space can be disorienting. Time is spent like nowhere else. You are taken out of the typical work-a-day world and are disconnected from past and future. The day is measured by how long it takes to fix your hair, do your make-up and paint your nails. These are power rituals for the TG, filled with significance. You live this way for several days in a row. It becomes the norm and you are surrounded by hundreds of people who share this norm. Unlike trade conven-

# Smalls....

**Intersexed Boyz**

The American Boyz organization for female to male transgendered and intersexed person (FTMs) has elected Raven Kaldera, intersexed activist, educator, and author to the Board of Directors (BoD) of the American Boyz.

[GAIN News - 9/12/98]

**"Camp"-aign**

In Australia, there is a conservative politician from Queensland named Pauline Hanson.

There is also a drag queen who bears a strking resemblence to Ms Hanson called Pauline Pantsdown (think Pans-Dun in Aussie). Ms. Pantsdown, who is running for Senate in the Australian Election campaign that is now on, follows in the great tradition of Aussie drag satire, as typified by Dame Edna Everage.

*[GAIN News - 9/23/98]*

**The Queen is Dead; Long live the King**

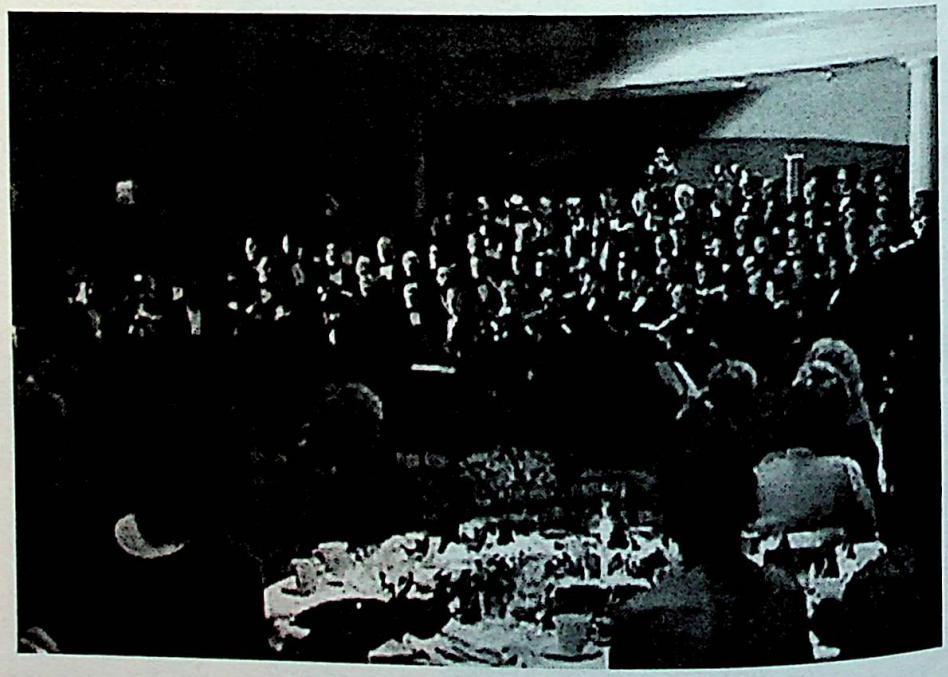
Says filmmaker John Waters, "I'm not adverse to outrageousness for the spectacle of it all. In fact, I'm mostly in favor of it. But most of what passes for outrageous is just old to the truly outrageous. I mean drag queens? That's so over. What's interesting now is drag kings, but it will take a while for them to figure that one out."

*[GAIN News - 10/14/98]*

tions where a nametag signifies who you are and what you do, at a gender convention, most people call themselves by names that bear little relationship to the outside world. And they wear make-up and dress dissimilarly from how they usually dress. The fact that almost everyone presents herself stripped of the usual signifiers tends to level any hierarchy. People lose their statuses and there is a general sense of egalitarianism. This sense of equality and the fact that the event is inclusive creates a strong feeling of community. A famous anthropologist once wrote that the achievement of a similar egalitarian communal feeling was a fundamental motivation for pilgrimage. The added aspect of being crossdressed intensifies that feeling. But the feeling can't last (even in sacred shrines). Differences become noticeable and statuses reassert themselves. After the initial expectation, some become disappointed. Marisa Richmond even commented in her speech that there always were participants who didn't look as if they were having a good time. She urged the more experienced conventioneers to help the shy neophytes. But I don't think first-time shyness is the only obstacle for conventioneers to enjoy themselves. I also think there is a problem simply with the way men are conditioned to behave. Men (and almost of these ladies have been raised as men) are taught to do, not to experience. I think it's difficult for them to experience passively the delicious sensation of being feminine for an extended period of time in a place where it's safe for them to be as feminine as they want. Instead, it's as if some conventioneers need to prove their femininity by hard drinking and all-night partying. While I like to party along with the next girl, rather than drinking to excess to achieve euphoria, there's a euphoria that already exists at a gender conference that can be nursed while there and relished after. And while I started this piece in a joking way, I actually believe that trying to experience a gender conference more like a pilgrimage might help some to enjoy it more fully. There certainly is much to enjoy.

Southern Comfort is the most successful gender conference. Maybe it has something to do with Atlanta's civic pride and Southern hospitality. Its dedicated volunteers seemingly want to offer as much as possible to as many as possible. The caretakers of the event are the most accommodating and intelligent hostesses, but they're not afraid of taking risks. Anthropologists have noted that shrine caretakers usually try to impose their own doctrine upon the ritual and control the pilgrims' competing interpretations and perceptions. What is so impressive with Southern Comfort's organizers is that they welcome controversial expressions and perspectives, as their choice of speakers demonstrates. How many TGs cheerfully going off to a gender convention would have expected they would be urged by Leslie Feinberg to join the "Trans-liberation Movement," a resistance movement linking all disenfranchised persons against the "systems of oppression" that reinforce class distinctions and deny individuals the ownership of their bodies? How many would have expected that at a conference in the Bible Belt they would hear a speaker compare SRS rights to abortion rights? And how many would have expected that at a convention in a place where race can still be an issue (and apparently was to a few), organizers would have scheduled two dynamic speakers of African descent, Dawn Wilson and Dr. Marisa Richmond? The conventioneers might not have expected it, but judging by the standing ovations that all three speakers received, they certainly welcomed it. And that reveals another amazing aspect of Southern Comfort. It always exceeds expectations.

I love going to gender conventions and I always have a "good time" whether I dance all night or just visit with my chosen family. I suppose a psychologist might say that being within a congregation of my transgendered sisters and brothers reinforces my secular psychological structures. But I prefer to think of each such journey as a pilgrimage.



# Southern Comfort: Draws Record Crowd

By Laura Brown

More than 500 gather for social and political conference, and press the Human Rights Campaign to add transgender rights to its mission.

As dozens of attendees at last weekend's Southern Comfort transgender conference waited outside the event's host hotel Friday night for shuttles to Atlanta nightclubs, a group of about five Bible-carrying young people began shouting verses at the hotel's door. Assessing the situation, Southern Comfort Board Chair Sabrina Marcus broke into song-a rousing rendition of "God Bless America" that soon had the crowd of about 100 transgendered people singing, and the tiny group of protesters fleeing. Rather than disrupting the eighth annual event, held last weekend at Buckhead's Terrace Garden Inn, the incident exemplified the spirit that organizers said makes Southern Comfort the most popular transgender event in the country.

While they cite "phenomenal growth" and "cutting edge" seminars as hallmarks of last weekend's Southern Comfort Conference, they attribute its overall success to the sense of "home" and empowerment it provides to transgendered attendees from all over the world. Organizer Terry Murphy described Southern Comfort as "what amounts to a transgender Pride event," providing the opportunity "to experience the joy of being a transgendered person in a group of transgendered people, where you are completely the majority." Murphy, a former Southern Voice editor, resigned as a member of the Southern Comfort board of directors on Sunday to accept a position as the event's first year-round executive director.

"I can't tell you what a profound experience [being in the majority for the first time] is," said Murphy. "As a gay person, when you find the gay community, and you walk into that gay church or gay bar for the first time-you're a fairly young person typically when you have that experience of dropping your otherness at the door and walking into a public space that's full of people exactly like you.

"Southern Comfort is the only place on the planet where transgendered people can have that experience, and even if you are doing something as silly as learning how to get your wig styled that is very personal and political at the same time. It's life changing," Murphy continued. "Laid on top of that very simple opportunity is the opportunity to learn a lot, not only about personal issues, but about intellectual ideas and political issues."

Conference co-chair Jennileigh Love offered similar reasons for her involvement with Southern Comfort, which she attended for the first time four years ago.

"A lot of people helped me when I got into this whole gender thing, and I asked myself, 'What can I do to give back, to save just one person?'" she said.

"Well, I'll take 400 to 500 over one any day, and I want to help people come to grips with who they are and build community. Southern Comfort is home, it's a great community builder, and it's a party. Imagine living your whole life in some little town where you always felt like you were the only one. Finally being one of the majority is a powerful thing."

Record attendance

According to Murphy, the "big story" from this year's Southern Comfort Conference was the attendance-515 registered participants, a 60-percent increase from last year's 320. Organizers said the record participation-which included male-to-female and female-to-male, pre-op, post-op, and non-op, transsexuals, transgenderists and heterosexual cross dressers-created organizational headaches while demonstrating the growing strength of the transgender movement.

"The growth this year was amazing-it was difficult to manage, it was just chaos, but we don't want to put a limit on it," Love said. "We want to help all of the folks who come down, and we heard so many stories of how we did that."

While exact numbers were not available, Love said a "significant number" of those attending Southern Comfort were female-to-male "transmen"-a segment of the transgendered community that has been less visible in mainstream media, but that is growing in visibility and political power.

Leslie Feinberg, [ www.transgenderwarrior.org ], described by Murphy as "the most celebrated living female-to-male queer theorist in the world, maybe ever in history," delivered Saturday's keynote address. [See Leslie's piece on the NY Police Riot in this issue. – Ed.]

Maxwell Anderson, a "transman" who serves on the Southern Comfort board, said growing activism in the community has created some tension with male-to-female transgenders "who don't want to take us seriously," but praised Southern Comfort as one of the most inclusive transgender events.

The record attendance also helped the Southern Comfort Conference raise $5,600 for charity.

Southern Comfort Continued....

Continued .....

## Taking on HRC exclusion

According to Love, the theme for seminars at this year's Southern Comfort was "cutting edge stuff that has never been done before," including seminars bringing together trans men and women, sessions focusing on sexuality, and a tense but productive "transgender townhall meeting" with staff from the Human Rights Campaign.

HRC, America's largest gay and lesbian rights organization, has drawn criticism from the transgender community for refusing to include transgender rights in the agency's mission statement or in the proposed [US] federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would ban job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation but not gender identity. The sometimes heated Saturday afternoon discussion-which brought together leaders of transgender organizations and Tony Esoldo, southern field organizer for HRC-drew an audience of 20 and ultimately proved productive, both sides agreed.

"The vast majority of the audience [was] either trans-activists upset with HRC or members of the trans community who are also members of HRC, so it wasn't one-sided," said Murphy, who served as moderator for the forum. "HRC was not pilloried, although a couple of members of the audience expressed the passion with which many in the transgender community regard HRC's refusal to deal with us."

Although his comments were often interrupted by objections from vocal audience members, Esoldo later called the meeting a success. "I thought it was great," he said. "It was difficult, and there are still some misconceptions out there. HRC is on a journey with this, and we need to keep moving, and I think we are. I think being there was good, and I made a lot of good contacts and friends."

Murphy said the very political HRC townhall meeting was just one of the seminars at Southern Comfort that reflected the community's diverse interests.

This article originally appeared in the October 8, 1998 issue Southern Voice and is being posted with permission of Southern Voice. Reprinted with permission from Veronica Smith and Transgender Forum (http://www.tgforum.com).

## NY Police Riot at Matthew Sheperd Memorial

On the evening of Oct. 19, 1998, in New York City, a political funeral for Matthew Shepherd became what some are calling a second Stonewall. 5000 people gathered for a march down 5th Avenue; organizers had expected 500. NYC police went to brutal lengths to try to stop the march, including mounted police assaulting demonstrators with their horses. 120 people representing three generations of queer activists were arrested, including Sylvia Rivera, Latina drag queen who was a combatant at the first Stonewall Rebellion in 1969; Leslie Feinberg, transgender activist and author; Minnie Bruce Pratt, lesbian poet and white anti-racist activist; and most of the young lesbians and gay men who were the organizers, legal observers, and marshalls for the march. Young queer activists, many of whom were wearing purple ribbons in protest of violence against queer youth, were particularly targeted by the police. They also provided militant spirit for the marchers, who battled police in the streets for two hours, and won against hundreds of cops in full riot gear who had been called in from all five NY boroughs. The march, estimated by some as including 8,000 people at its height, successfully reached Madison Square Park, its original destination. Marchers held a speakout, some climbing lampposts to address the crowd. Many carried signs that said Fight Back, and referred both to Matt Shepherd's death and to James Byrd, the African-American man lynched in Jasper, Texas. Many spoke movingly about the need to unite the l/g/b/t movement with other movements, including those against racist violence and police brutality. For more stories about this rebellion, go to <www.transgenderwarrior.org> or <www.mbpratt.org>.

## NYPD Assault on Peaceful Political Funeral for Matthew Shepard

*Chelsea Elisabeth Goodwin, co-chair*
*Metropolitan Gender Network*

At approximately 7:30 this evening (10/19/98) I received a call from one of my skater friends named Snake who had just seen Sylvia Rivera beaten with clubs, kicked, and dragged to a police vehicle on her face for kneeling with representatives of the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence project on Fifth Ave at approximately 59th St. while other cops shredded her Stonewall flag. I heard the police beat and arrest Snake as he was speaking to me from a pay telephone near the site of this act of extreme police brutality.

Locally known Puerto Rican activist Marisella Guzman, who has given me an exclusive taped eyewitness account not only witnessed the arrest but has taken photographs which will be developed and available for the press within the next few hours. According to Ms. Guzman, with corroborating eyewitness testimony from Stonewall Veteran and Gay Activist Alliance founder Randy Wicker, after this arrest the crowd, by now 6000 strong and growing proceeded down Fifth Avenue towards Times Square, switching at one point to Sixth Ave. temporarily blocking both Avenues.

As the crowd grew to an estimated 9000 people half again that number of cops arrived with buses, scooters, horses and a large squad in full riot gear (helmets, clubs, etc) charged the crowd, indiscriminately clubbing people including Maura Baily of the Anti-Violence Project. Ms Guzman and Mr. Wicker reported that Leslie Feinberg and Minnie Bruce Pratt were involved in the melee, and it was later confirmed by Workers World reporter Kristiana T'omas that Leslie Feinberg was arrested. Sylvia Rivera also was arrested, beaten and is to be arraigned at 1 Police Plaza at 10am tomorrow morning (Tuesday). People who were attempting to comply with police orders to disperse were still being arrested. Randy Wicker says that this is the worst violence he has seen in any demonstration since Stonewall itself.

As an editorial comment, the AVP was one of the sponsors of this March in full co-operation with its director, New York City Council Democratic candidate Christine Quinn. Council member and State Senate candidate publicly supported this march. The unspeakable violence that occurs tonight represents nothing less than Mayor Giuliani, a Republican allow-

ing his notoriously violent, racist and homophobic police department to assault what was essentially a peaceful political funeral, intended to promote support for an anti-hates crime bill and led by mainstream Lesbian and Gay Democrats. There is only one applicable word for this kind of behaviour. This is Fascism, pure and simple.

Jail House Rocks: "Matthew Shepard Lives!"

*By Leslie Feinberg*

## One Police Plaza, Central Booking, New York

"Matthew Shepard lives! Matthew Shepard lives!" we thundered as cops dragged another activist into our cellblock. Each new prisoner received a hero's welcome from his peers: cheers, applause, hugs, a shower of kisses.

We were packed into a makeshift men's "bull" pen: 68 gay and bisexual men, one drag queen who had fought the cops at the 1969 Stonewall rebellion that ignited the gay liberation movement, and—unbeknownst to some of the police—one transgendered female. In addition, a nearby cellblock held 33 lesbian and bisexual activists. We were held in an old central booking station, long unused.

All of us were arrested Oct. 19 for taking our anger about the horrific murder of a young gay Wyoming student onto the streets of New York. That demonstration, built by a grassroots and word-of-mouth mobilization, swelled at times to more than 10,000.

Earlier in the evening, thousands of us gathered in front of the swank Plaza Hotel in midtown at the height of rush hour to hold a political funeral for Matthew Shepard. The rally bristled with placards linking the anti-gay lynching of Shepard to the racist lynching in June of James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Texas.

Some 80 of us were the first to get busted when we stepped off the curb to take our march onto Fifth Avenue. Cops cinched our hands behind our backs with plastic handcuffs and dragged us into four police vans that blocked the avenue. Police rounded up all the legal observers, march negotiators and marshals they could get their hands on.

Three precincts were used to house the volume of prisoners. I was in a group that was brought to the old Central Booking Station. All of us were locked up without water or food. Some had their desperately needed medications confiscated.

We were not allowed to make phone calls or see our attorneys, and were not told what we were charged with.

Each new wave of arrivals was urged to turn the benches into makeshift stages for an impromptu rally. Activists rose up above our noisy throng to regale us with the details of the battles we'd missed.

"After you all got arrested, we started marching on the sidewalk," one young man said. "But the cops pushed and shoved us. They even drove up on the sidewalk on motorbikes headed right for us.

"So we took the street." We roared at that news.

Others filled in what happened next. At 55th Street, the police barricaded the avenue to divert everyone onto the side street. Then cops targeted the march leadership for a further round of mass arrests.

Another activist picked up the narrative. The crowd headed west to Sixth Avenue, only to run into another cop barricade, "Which we overturned," he said. "We made our way through traffic to get back to Fifth Avenue so we could march past St. Patrick's Cathedral—which we did.

"Anti-gay bigot Cardinal O'Connor has got to go," he concluded.

An older gay activist told us how marchers had been trapped between lines of riot-equipped police in Times Square. Cops on horseback charged into the crowds. Our anger was tangible as he told us how police wildly flailed at people with night sticks, bloodying those they could reach.

Thousands of people—broken up by police into smaller groups—all converged eventually on Madison Square Park at 23rd Street.

Richard told us, "Two police helicopters were hovering over the park. That's how a lot of us knew where to go. There were thousands of us covering every inch of the streets, the park, every bench. All of us were united. This is the best thing I've ever been part of in the gay community!"

'NOW THERE'S ANGER COMING THROUGH'

Behind bars, the deep emotion shared by people all across the United States about the torture-murder of a gentle, young Wyoming student was thick as resin.

I saw a man sitting on a bench, staring straight ahead, hands tightly clasped. "Are you OK?" I asked. He looked at me with tears in his eyes and nodded slowly.

"I've been quiet," John Boyle said. "Now there's anger coming through."

Keith Cylar took in all those packed into the cell with an expansive gesture. "Look: here's a lawyer, a schoolteacher, a clerk. There's young people just getting fired up for the first time, old-time act-uppers—a large cross-section of the population. People are angry."

Many told me maddening accounts of police brutality and bigotry. Fred described how cops held him for hours in tight handcuffs that cut off all feeling in his hands. By the time the police found a knife to cut them off, he passed out unconscious.

His lover, David—who is HIV-positive—saw it all happen. "I'd rather lose a finger than have my lover be so stressed out from worry," Fred said.

After Fred passed out, David asked the cops to see if his lover was still breathing. "Relax!" a cop barked at him.

"If that was your wife face-down on the floor unconscious, would you relax?" David retorted.

For those who might forget how righteous anger against oppression can nurture tender, compassionate consciousness, I had my own personal reminder tonight.

I was the only female-bodied person in the men's cellblock—that I knew of. As a gender "outlaw," just producing identification papers left me vulnerable to grave legal and physical dangers. I had already endured one brutal "pat-down" by male cops, but we were still awaiting transfer to the custody of Department of "Corrections" officers. I wondered how I would survive the perils of the night.

However, from the moment I was arrested, many of the men detained with me recognized me as a trans activist and author. Once inside the cell block, a small group of gay and bisexual men approached me.

One brother wrapped his arm around my shoulder. "We know who you are," he said. "We are honored to count you among us tonight. We'll do everything we can to help you."

And they did.

'IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING, FOLKS!'

Continued on page 24.....

## A Shopping Guide for Gals a little Bigger or Taller than the Average.

Here is a great list of some resources available to gals who are more than size 5 and taller than 5' 5".

So Tall. A Canadian private label company offering tailored suitings and separates in size 8 to 18. Call 1 888 768 2552 for a fall mail order catalogue.

Tall Girl. Selling clothes in larger and taller sizes, from size 8 to 20. I have been there many times and they are friendly and accommodating. Atrium on Bay in Toronto 416 977 4023. Yorkdale shopping center (easy access with a door off the parking lot so you don't have to go through the mall) 416 782 2260

Above Average at the Bay. In bay stores across Canada. Selling lingerie to outerwear in sizes 18 to 24.

Addition-Elle. Locations across Canada with career, casual and special occasion clothing in sizes 14 to 26.

The Answer Salon. Casual, business and special occasion clothing in sizes 14 to 24. 3200 Yonge street. 416 483 5663.

Antels. Locations across Canada in malls in sizes 14 to 24.

Big Bold and Beautiful. A wide range of all types of clothing in almost a superstore atmosphere. Many of our members have spent a fortune in this store. 1263 Bay St. Toronto. 923 4673.

Big Time. Resale shop selling all types of clothing in sizes 14 to 4X. Family owned, selling at 40 to 60% off retail prices. 551 Eglinton Ave. West Toronto. 481 6464

Celebrating Size. All types of clothing with a catalogue selling up to 8X. Located in Hamilton at 1760 Upper James St. 1 800 420 7824

Easy Expressions. Centerpoint Mall Toronto 222 6166. Business wear to lingerie in sizes 14 to 24.

Fourteen TwentyTwo. Holt Renfrews in-store shop featuring sizes 14 to 22. Found in most upscale malls.

Lagers. Imported and Domestic clothes in sizes 8 to 24. Full seamstress on hand and a wide array of styles. 1783 Avenue Rd. Toronto 782 1311

Linda Lundstrom Plus Sizes. In sizes 2 to 24 this store seems to cater to taller gals and can be found at 2507 Yonge st. 480 1602 or 94 George St. Oakville 905 338 3344

Marina Rinaldi. One of a kind shop offering some of the top designers. 131 Bloor St. West Toronto. 969 9677

Penningtons Superstores. Sixty three locations across Canada. Call 1 800 385 8585 for a location near you.

Rubenesque. A resale clothing store catering to the plus sized woman and designer labels. 1751 Avenue Rd. Toronto 787 8893.

Toni Plus. Career, casual and after 5 clothing in sizes 14 to 22. Bayview Village 512 0341, First Canadian Place 3672101 and Sherway Gardens 622 0784

Janet Rivers Fashion that Fits. A designer who custom makes clothes from size 0 to 26, with 7 signature pieces for fall '98. 15 Wilberton Rd. Toronto 483 6151.

Axmith Shoes. Casual and dress shoes in sizes 3 to 13 and AAAA to D widths. 659 Yonge St. Toronto 960 9871

Tall Crest Shoes. A part of Tall Girl chain and located in their stores. Dress and casual shoes in 10 to 14.

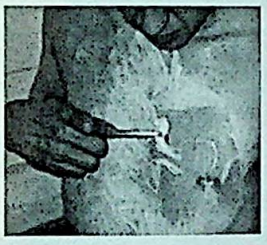
## CREATING CLEAVAGE

The obvious first step in creating cleavage is complete elimination of chest hair. Again my recommendation is a blade rather than an electric razor. If you have never done this before, and have a lot of hair to remove you will find your blade gets plugged with hair, real quickly. A quick way to remove excess hair is to glide the razor backwards against your skin, rather than in the forward cutting motion. You can actually swipe back and forth in a continuous motion to speed up the shaving procedure, but be careful not to let the blade slide sideways, to prevent cuts.

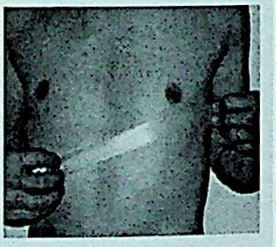
Like your face, you want the closest shave possible, so move the blade up, down and sideways, to get all the hair. Once you are done, relather and do it again for good measure. If you have never done this before, or even if you have, you may find new shaved area's are very susceptible to ingrown hairs, pimples and so on. COLD WATER to the rescue. When you are finished shaving apply ice cold water to the area shaved. This not only includes chest, but face, bikini line and so on! A few seconds of torture will shave you some long term discomfort and problems later.

Once you are cleanly shaven and your skin is dry, apply a toner to your skin. If you skin tends to be damp and stickey, you may want to apply a light powder, but be sure to brush all the excess away. You are now ready to begin.

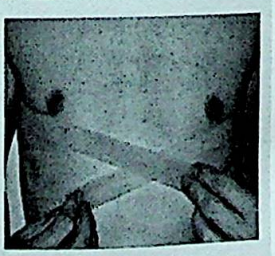
TAPE is likely the single most important ingredient in the whole cleavage process. A FEW IMPORTANT TIPS, don't use duct tape or a similar product, and when removing the tape do it SLOWLY. Raven stills bears scars from he first time, when she figured it was like removing a bandage. The tape came off with a fresh layer of skin intact! Ouch!



My recommendation for tape is a medical tape by 3M called Transpore. It has a ribbed finish to it and is elastic but with pretty good strength. First rip off a piece that is long enough to extend from the side of your chest (so your arm would cover the end of the tape, it if you had your arm hanging by your side) to about three or four inches past the middle of your chest, when extending it almost horizontally across your body as in the photo below. Raven has a piece of tape in her hands about 13" in length.



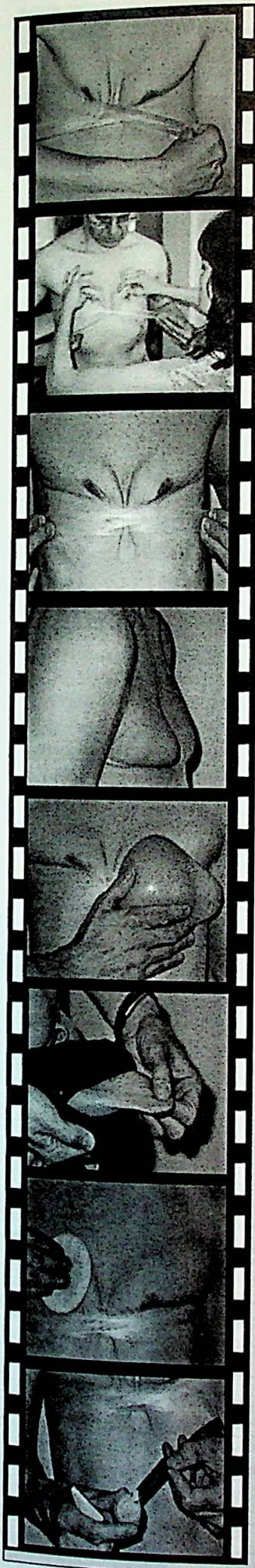
Now attach the tape under your arms and angle it slightly downwards and just under your nipples where the tape can also be pressed in place. The rest of the tape can just hang loose until you have done exactly the same procedure on the other side. At this point you can grab each end of the loose tape as shown below.



It's very important that the tape is gripping your skin tightly. If it isn't and you used powder on your skin, you may have to remove the powder, and try again. Now take the loose ends of the tape and pull the tape in such a manner that you are moving your arms outwards and away from your body. This will cause the skin to bunch up which begins the effect of creating cleavage.

Now, as I said, the tape is pretty elastic, with relatively good hold, but until you are comfortable doing this you may have it pulling off or even snapping in half. Practice makes perfect so don't be impatient. In an ideal world, you would have another pair of hands to help. If you do, have the other person grab the skin, as you are pulling the tape, to bring as much skin to the center of your chest as possible.

This can be a little painful, but the final effect is worth it - right? Once things look even, attach the tape to your chest to hold everything in



place. At this point you should have another piece of tape handy, about 10" in length, that you can place across the other tape to make it more secure.

Pulling all this skin together like this can have a negative effect of causing your stomach to protrude a bit. Suck it in, or you may want to get a waist cincher or corset if necessary. After a few minutes the tape does tend to relax a bit, which eliminates some of the problem, while retaining the cleavage.

Once the tape is securely in place you can adjust the skin around the cleavage area to eliminate any rolls. You should end up with a single cleavage line, with a breast formed on each side. Here's a side view:

This build up will eventually be enhanced with a breast form, although an economy substitute is rice. Take an old pair of panty hose, put in an amount of rice equivalent to the desired breast size. The breast form (or bag of rice) will sit in the cup of the bra and below the breast formed on your body.

If price is not a concern use a good quality silicone breast, and be sure to get a prosthesis bra that enables you to slide the breast form into a pocket inside the cup.

Prior to putting on your bra, you first want to enhance the effect with makeup and highlighting. Take your powder puff and get a good layer of powder on it. Fold the powdered side of the puff inward and grind the two ends together to compact the powder into the puff, rather than just sitting loosely on top.

Now pat the puff across your entire chest, or at least the area that will be exposed once you are completely dressed.

As is the case when covering hair anywhere on your body, do not start with a foundation, as the blue appearance of even a closely shaved face or chest will shine right through. One of the best products I have found to cover the blueness is called 'Tattoo Cover' and is generally available at a theatrical store. It comes in various colors so find one close to your skin tone.

Use a putty knife when removing makeup from its container. Apply it from the knife to your sponge.

You can smooth the tattoo cover in with a fair bit of pressure as a light coat should suffice. Once you have the tattoo cover applied you can powder again, brushing off the excess. You are now ready for the foundation. I always recommend that you avoid using a liquid foundation. Stick to creams as they will cover better.

Again, be sure to apply the foundation onto a sponge using a knife. Don't dip into the makeup with a used sponge as you will contaminate your makeup

that should otherwise last for a long time.

The foundation should be close to your skin color. With the sponge cover the entire area of your chest that will be exposed once you are dressed. Apply light powder again.

You are now ready to enhance the cleavage effect with some shading. At this point I would suggest putting the breast forms and bra on. Using a foundation, or eye shadow, several shades darker than your skin apply it on the cleavage line, right down into the bra.

Now, draw a line to form the outside of the breast.

Be sure not to spread any of the darker makeup onto the rounded breast area. In the photo below, I have hi-lighted the shaded area in blue to clearly define the area you should be covering.

Now, to further enhance the cleavage effect, you need a white powder makeup, such as eye shadow. Remember that dark colors create the effect of depth, which is why you use a darker color on the cleavage and breast line.

White will have the opposite effect. It creates the effect of bringing the image towards you! You will therefore want to spread the white powder on the formed breast area.

Once that is done you can blend the colors slightly to smooth the transition from one color to the next. Giving you the desired effect:

Slip into that favorite low cut blouse or jacket and you are set to dazzle. This is definitely one of those 'If I can do it, you can do it" stories. In drab Raven is very flat chested, even by male standards, but her chest never fails to get a lot of attention when out in femme!

I hope these tips are helpful girls and enjoy your NEW look!

Written and reprinted with permission from Makeovers By Tora,

Tora Roberts, Suite 321, 6540 East Hastings, Burnaby, BC, Canada V5B 1S2

Phone: (604)420-9568 (between 10:00 A.M. - 10:00 P.M. Pacific Time)

Check out Tora's web site, Life's a Draag at http://www.draag.com/

or E-Mail her at: brs@direct.ca

# Brandon Teena

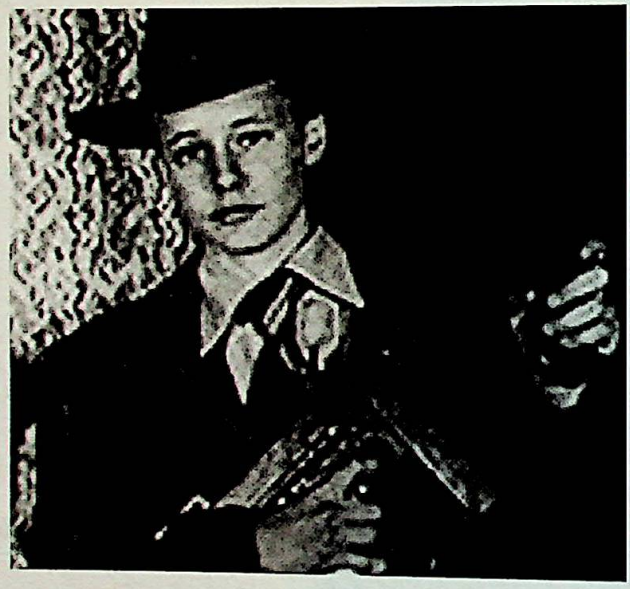
*By Davina Anne Gabriel*

[Many of you have heard of the terrible tragedy that befell matthew Sheperd, a gay student at the University of Wisconsin. We in the transgender community ought be aware of one of our own who also lost his life due to ignorance, hate and fear. Ed.]

(February 21, 1996, Falls City, Nebraska)

John Lotter, convicted of 3 counts of 1st degree murder for the deaths of :Brandon Teena:, Lisa Lambert, and Philip DeVine was sentenced to death this morning in Falls City, NE's county courthouse. Lotter's accomplice, Marvin Thomas Nissen, cut a deal for life imprinst Lotter. The victims' families feel that the sentence is appropriate.

Brandon Teena, whose birth name was Teena Brandon, was originally from Lincoln, Nebraska, and moved to nearby Humboldt in 1993, shortly after beginning to live full-time as a man in preparation for eventual sex-change surgery. Brandon passed easily as a man in Humboldt, but was discovered to be biologically and legally female by local police who arrested him on a misdemeanor check forgery charge two weeks prior to his slaying. Police then publicly released this information to the local newspaper, the Falls City Journal. One week later, on Christmas Day 1993, Brandon was raped and assaulted at a Christmas party by two men, whom he identified to local police as Nissen and Lotter, despite the fact that they had threatened to kill him if he reported the incident to the police.



However, charges of rape and assault were not filed against Nissen and Lotter until after Brandon's slaying despite the fact that his sister Tammy Brandon had called Richardson County sheriff Charles B. Laux four days before the slaying to ask why Lotter and Nissen had not been arrested even though Brandon had identified them as his attackers. According to Tammy Brandon, Sheriff Laux had responded to her inquiry by telling her that "he didn't need [her] to be doing his work." Laux, who has also been quoted as stating of Brandon that "you can call it it as far as I'm concerned." Laux has claimed that he had been "pursuing" the rape charges at the time of Brandon's death. During preliminary hearings, Sheriff's deputies testified that they were convinced that Lotter and Nissen had committed the rape and sexual assault, but had been directed by Sheriff Laux not to arrest them. Laux was defeated in his bid for re- election as Sheriff in November 1994.

Local authorities have denied that their outing of Brandon in any way contributed to his killers' motives, and have declined to classify it as a hate crime. However, Lotter's sister has confirmed that both Lotter and Nissen were enraged after learning that Brandon was anatomically female, but had been living as a man and was even dating a local woman, Lana Tisdale. Witnesses for the prosecution at Thomas Nissen's trial testified that both Nissen and Lotter were enraged at and resentful of Brandon after learning that he was anatomically female but had been living as a man. Testimony during that trial also revealed that the Sheriff's office had interviewed dozens of people and prepared an extensive report on Brandon's rape and sexual assault during the week between the rape and the murder. After learning Brandon had reported the rape, Lotter and Nissen coldly and calculatingly plotted and searched Brandon out for an entire week to kill him. They drove to Lincoln (2 hours from Falls City) looking for him. They carried rope and a hatchet in their car, along with a change of clothes for each of them, because of the blood splattering they anticipated. When they finally found Brandon at the farmhouse, he was hiding under a blanket—totally defenseless. After killing Brandon, they allowed Lisa Lambert to put her baby in a crib before they shot and killed her. Philip DeVine was pleading for his life when they put the gun to his head and killed him.

Marvin Thomas Nissen, 22, also of Falls City, has been convicted of one count of first degree murder in the death of Brandon Teena and two counts of second degree murder in the deaths of Lisa Lambert, whom Brandon was living with at the time, and Phillip DeVine, a friend who was visiting them on the night of the murder. Nissen was also convicted on one count of first degree burglary. Nissen was convicted on Friday; 3 March 1995, following eighteen hours of deliberation over the course of two days, by a jury of ten women and two men, all from Omaha, Nebraska, and sequestered in Falls City throughout the course of the trial. According to reports in the North Platte Telegraph, even Nissen's supporters felt that he was guilty.

John Lotter plead not guilty to involvement in the murders, claiming that although he was with Nissen on the night they were committed, that he was outside asleep in the car while Nissen was committing the murders. Lotter's attorney stated in his opening arguments on 15 May that all of the evidence linking Lotter to the murders was circumstantial, and sought to prevent Nissen from testifying against him. .

The small (pop. 5200) farming community of Falls City has had to pay $488,000 in court costs, with more in store because of the endless appeals process whenever the death sentence is handed down. When the news interviewed Thomas Nissen after Lotter's sentencing, he said some pretty interesting things. He talked about knowing Brandon as a friend and said he didn't know what went wrong the night of the murders. He kept calling Brandon "he" and said he had no idea that "he" was a woman. "We went drinking together, talked about girls, and even wrestled together!". When one

is willing to kill a "friend" who violates the gender binary system, it makes one realize how strong it is.

Leslie Feinberg, along with the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project has called upon the United States Justice Department to investigate possible violations of Brandon's civil rights by local authorities due to their failure to arrest Nissen and Lotter prior to Brandon's death. "It's fair to ask if Brandon Teena would still be alive today if authorities and the local newspaper had not forcibly outed him after he had successfully passed as a male in a small town," Feinberg stated.

Transgender activists are also concerned because there are people proceeding with book and movie projects on this case who see Brandon Teena as girl who liked to dress up like a boy. Aphrodite Jones, who is writing a book called All She Ever Wanted called him "Teena Brandon" thoughout the memorial service sponsored by the transgender community in Kansas City. Riki Anne Wilchins of Transexual Menace says "He died for the right to be a man—to be Brandon Teena—and members of the Menace, FTM International, the Menace Men and the Lesbian Avengers have vowed to do everything they can to honor his memory and his sacrifice."

(Reporting from Davina Anne Gabriel, Janeway)

The Brandon Teena Story is the best queer documentary since Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman's 1984 Academy Award-winning Times of Harvey Milk.

This chilling documentary about the tragic life and death of Brandon Teena -- the 20 year-old transgendered Nebraskan who was raped and murdered in the winter of 1993 -- interviews the women who knew him ("he was every woman's dream," says one of his ex-girlfriends), the men who killed him (currently serving time in prison), and the police who failed to protect him.

Deftly unveiling the culpability of the police, the parents and the community, filmmakers Susan Muska and Greta Olafsdottir draw a powerful portrait of intolerance (sexism, homophobia and transphobia) in small town middle America. But as the film indicts it simultaneously reveals a deep sympathy for its subjects: there are no simple villains here.

Beautiful videography (especially the lingering shots of the fields and streets of Nebraska), well-paced editing, and powerfully utilized archival footage complement the film's revealing interviews to create a must-see documentary that is both intimately personal and universally political.

--Jenni Olson

Continued form page 19 .....

At 1 a.m., the police announced they were going to "chain- gang" us. We were transferred in manacles, chained together, to the lower Manhattan Tombs jail. As I looked around at the prisoners there—predominantly African American and Latino—I was struck with the irony of the situation. This capitalist jail was built on one of the northern end- stations of the great underground railroad that transported African peoples from chattel slavery more than a century ago.

I also recalled that in the early 18th century, the Carolinas passed a law that no more than 12 African people could attend the funeral of a slave—because the gatherings became a catalyst for political resistance.

And now the administration of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani had tried to bust up a funeral march. It couldn't stand the fact that thousands would be calling for mass solidarity against the racist and anti-gay lynchings that are a hallmark of counter-revolutionary terror under capitalism.

One of the people I was chained to in the police van, Jason Chappell, was a former organizer of the Borders Bookstore union drive. He saw a connection between three recent New York events: a demonstration by 40,000 construction workers, the Million Youth March and this Shepard protest.

"Each time," Chappell noted, "there has been an overreaction by Giuliani and his police force."

I was also handcuffed to Sylvia Rivera, a Puerto Rican drag queen who had fought the cops at the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969. Then, too, the police and courts and jails were used as weapons to repress an already downtrodden community of African American, Latina, and white gay drag queens and butches—many of them young, hungry and homeless.

Decades of anger exploded that night in the streets of Greenwich Village.

And a new social movement emerged from that blast of rage.

It was a contingent of that mass movement that took the streets of Manhattan tonight to organize even wider sectors of the population into the struggle against the rising cesspool of anti-gay and racist violence.

Inside a Tombs cell, in the early hours of the morning, Sylvia Rivera concluded, "Tonight is just the beginning, folks. This is the rebirth of Stonewall. Another piece of history in the making."

And she ought to know.

[ © Workers World Service, ww@workers.org, reprinted by permission.]

# Guest column: 'Not an easy decision'

*Willow C. Arune The Province*

Staff Photo by John Denniston / Willow Arune says transsexuals 'risk everything' and should be treated as people, not as objects of humor or ridicule.

I can see it now:

The wire service sends an article on transsexuals just as The Province gets ready for another edition . . .

"Gosh, we need something funny on Page 3. What about this tranny article?"

Yes, transsexuals are always good for a laugh in the press. Lightens up the news of the day. Men trying to be women and women trying to be men -- what could be funnier?

In our society, gender is a given for most people. For some, estimated at one in 100,000 (both male and female) that is not the case.

Every day is torment -- trying to fit into a gender that makes life itself a challenge. Many die along the way either by their own hands or through the violence that erupts from others.

People confuse gender with orientation. To be transsexual must mean you are gay. Not so. They confuse transsexuality with transvestites -- not the same.

"Trannies" are all young; I am 51 and certainly not the oldest that I know of. We all work as prostitutes. Among my fellow transsexuals are doctors, bus drivers and police officers, secretaries, radio announcers and business people. I myself have a legal background.

Transsexuals are those who know they were born into the wrong sex and who undergo painful operations and treatments to rectify nature's mistake. To do so, they risk their careers, family, friends -- everything. They even risk their lives, so strong is the need to change to the gender their minds insist is right for them. They become targets of hate mail and harassment. It is a path that is difficult, physically and emotionally.

I am a transsexual and have been on hormones for over six months. It was not an easy decision or one taken lightly. Since then I have endured emotional bricks and bats daily, but the goal is still there, a dream that must be achieved.

Three months ago, I got up in the morning and went to the mirror. The gradual effect of the hormones had worked. For the first time in 51 years, I saw my own face in the mirror -- not that of a stranger. It was a wonderful moment. Soon, there shall be more changes.

Funny. Until you walk in my shoes. A daily miracle always gets me by: A smile or a "Hello, dear" from a clerk. But the humor that finds its way into the media is not funny at all. Rather, it is another emotional brick thrown right at me, or so it seems.

To be transsexual in our society takes more courage than one can imagine.

We deserve to be treated as people, not as objects of humor and ridicule.

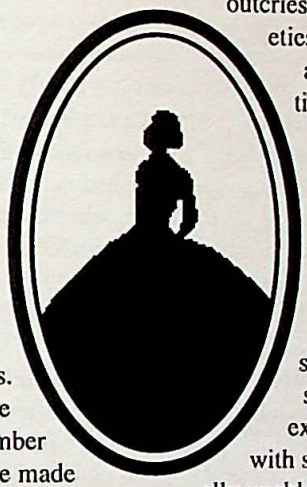
Willow C. Arune
Vancouver

# A Brief History of the Corset

1830-1890

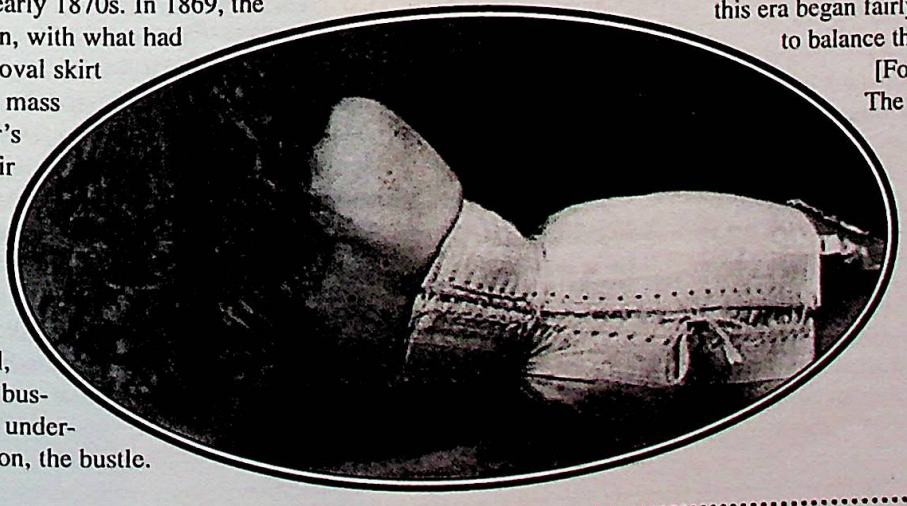
By Shenlei E. Winkler

The late 1830s to the mid 1840s were the era of the poke bonnet, with various movements towards a round versus an oval opening. The waistline of this decade dropped steadily from the Empire waist common in the Regency era preceding the Victorian period. Skirts became more voluminous while the waist gradually reemerged from its hiding place to assume its paramount position of interest that it kept throughout the Victorian era. Clothing was romantic, with puffs and frills.



The late 1840s to mid-1850s saw the increase in the width of the skirt, with a concurrent increase in the number of petticoats to support the bulk of the skirt. Skirts were made of a length of fabric, gauged or gathered onto the waistband. It was not till the later 1850s that gored skirts began appearing, along with the cage crinoline, or hoop skirt. The general silhouette is that of a "dome".

The crinoline era, or 'hoop skirt' era, reached its heyday from the late 1850s to the late 1860s. Skirts were supported by the cage crinoline, which was so uniquitous that factory owners posted signs abjuring their hired (female) workers from wearing the crin petticoats to work, as they took up too much room. Although the fashion magazines showed huge skirts, most women actually wore much less voluminous skirts in their day-to-day lives. As with all fashion, the trend-setters wore the fashions depicted in the magazines, while the lesser fashionable lights contrived as best they could according to finances and circumstance. The crinoline-supported skirts initially were completely round in circumference, but as the 60s developed, the bulk of the skirt was moved gradually to the rear, culminating in an oval-shaped skirt. This movement foreshadowed the first bustle period of the early 1870s. In 1869, the first bustled skirt was shown, with what had been the bulk of a simple oval skirt tucked and gathered into a mass which began at the wearer's waist and tumbled from their to her ankles. The outcry against this look, as usual, was fierce, with critcs decrying the new fashions as causing the fairer sex to appear 'not unlike a camel, with a hump and all'. The bustled skirts were supported underneath by a special contraption, the bustle.



Bustles were made from everything from net wire to rubberized inflatable pillows. The craze became so great that the lower classes, in an effort to mimic their mistresses, attempted any number of efforts at a bustle, including one enterprising maid who wore two feather dusters pinned under her skirt!

The bustle skirt receeded by the mid to late 70s, as the hips emerged as the new fashion focus, arising from their swaddlings like Venus from the froth. Tightlacing was never so asiduously practised as during the 1870s, and many were the outcries by the various rational dress societies speaking out against the evils of tightlacing. As with all fshion woes, of course, the facts of side-effects of tightlacing had no bearing on the average wearer's fashion decisions, and corsets, corset designs, and corsetieres continued to evolve apace.

As the hips emerged from their curtains, the cuirasse bodice and the tied-back skirt became the fashion interest. The cuirasse bodice was worn skin-tight down over the hips, and was described as being not unlike a second corset in its fit. The tied-back skirts were equally uncomfortable, as while the wearers sought to create a trim line from corsage to ankle, the excess fabric was all thrown to the rear and 'tied back' with strings inside the skirt. The wearer was rendered virtually unable to walk with anything other than a mincing gait, and many a waggish rhyme was written about the fashionable fair who fell while skating and could not stand because her skirt would not permit her to do so.

The second bustle era began in the mid-80s and trailed off early on in the 90s. The second bustle era was notable for a thinner, narrower bustle emerging from atop the fanny. The skirts usually were some form of double or triple skirt, with tabliers and other forms of drapery swagged about the hips and dropping into a train. Trains were worn everywhere, from house to street. The Roaring nineties were ushered in by an increased focus on the hips as the focus of sexual attraction. Excess fabric was skimmed away, and all the bulk of the skirts were thrown to the rear in large plaits. Tightlacing was ferociously practised in pursuit of the waspwaist. As the female half of the race became more physically active, more fitted clothing was required to meet her needs. Tailor made suits appeared with wide skirts that narrowed to a tight-laced waspwaist. Sleeves of this era began fairly slim, but then enlarged to balance the ballooning "bell" skirt.

[For more information visit The Victorian Fashion Pages,

# Courage and Transition

Alexis Doireann Fenner

To all the other hamsters in my extended family.

I too, often wonder what courage is. I now know that I spend many hours living in fear, it is a fear that all of us have to face from society because we are gender challenged. I use the term gender challenged because most or just about all other names that we are called sound as if we are carriers of some dreaded incurable contagious disease. We all know how our lifestyle changes when we come out and start to make the transition. Not only do we have to contend with exposing our innermost feelings and needs to various doctors that we hardly have had contact with, we must virtually beg for help to remedy our situation.

I was born and christened Gina, I am or was intersexed.

Ambiguous genitals and a dysfunctional family, What a combination,HEY!. At eleven years of age they took away my identity and decided I was a male — when I say "they" I mean the doctors back in Wales. I underwent multiple surgeries to make my genitals look masculine. Not one person asked me what I wanted or how I felt about my gender and also I was not told what was being done to me. I became a male at eleven years old and at twelve I attempted suicide for the first time. I lived male for thirty nine years and attempted suicide many times.

I also married a wonderful woman who was my best friend for 33 years and she passed away in 1996. Although I was physically incapable of a relationship, she stayed with me all those years and taught me to understand what I needed to be me.

In Saskatchewan all transsexuals are sent to Jurassic Clarke [Clarke institute of Psychiatry — Ed.] for their assessment and recommendation for treatment and SRS. Unfortunately, my visit there did not go well and of course my report back to medicare was not what it should have been, and I was refused help with SRS. Questions asked by Clarke institute doctors, "Are you wearing panties under those clothes?" "Do you like sex with animals?" "Would you like to have sex with children?" "Does sex with dead bodies excite you?" Statement made by one doctor in generalizing about transsexuals, "You are all deviants".

Well I am sorry, I did not travel 3000 kms to feel like something stuck to the bottom of the doctor's shoe. Most of all I felt completely insulted and suicidal at being questioned and thought of as the type of person they thought would be capable of doing those things. Also they were adamant that they were to contact my family in Britain for their support and permission to make this change. I left my family over thirty years ago and have had no contact with them in all that time, why should they be asked to consent to my gender correction when I am a fifty year old adult? I refused to give family information and that did not sit well either.

I came back to Saskatchewan and started a complete transition on my own with just the help of my psychiatrist. I had a few friends and I explained to them about what I was going to do and what I was. I have not seen or spoken to them since, they all disappeared into the sunset. I had never cross dressed before and dressing female was very hard for me at first, nevertheless, I did and started life as Alexis. I had many problems with people and verbal abuse, also many threats of violence. With no role model to help me be female, I found this initial stage very scary and embarrassing but I continued on. It took me six months to get through this initial stage of transition before I became a passable female, during that time I was assaulted twice and my property vandalized.

I changed my telephone number and became unlisted, this stopped the threatening phone calls and the abusive ones too. I needed little electrolysis as I am 46xxy chromosomes and also have AIS so body and facial hair was no real problem. I did find an understanding electrologist that was very reasonably priced and I underwent removal of what facial hair I had.

My work place was completely unbearable and it was impossible to work in the same place. Because of the affects of Kleinfelters and AIS, I was allowed to take my disablement pension and quit work early.

The farther I got into transition, the more I knew that this was right for me and there was no turning back,nor did I want to turn back. Some local shops refused me service, I have been openly laughed at and insulted in the street. My car was vandalized and I was stalked on a regular basis. I called the police on many occasions for help, sometimes they responded other times they did not. One particular night when a group of people were banging on my house doors and windows, I called the police and the policeman who answered the phone suggested I go on the Gerry Springer show and promptly hung up on me. Another time a policeman came to my house during one of these frightening times, and he just said to me, "What do you expect when you are what you are?" He left without doing anything about my situation.

Over and over again I was told by the local police that there was nothing that they could do about people coming to my property to harass me. Eventually I bought a simple law book on property rights and the laws of trespass. October the 5th 1998, I successfully had a person who had stalked me and threatened me for over two and a half years, arrested and charged on a charge of mischief and stalking. He is now banned from making any contact with me or entering my property with pain of two years in prison if he does not comply. I also complained about the police force here and I am not a popular person with them now.

The policemen were ordered to attend an in-service course about transsexualism and intersexuals that was given by my family doctor, few attended but it was a start. Over this last year things have been sort of settling down for me and I find that more and more people give me a grudging acceptance and leave me alone. I have also found that by dressing correctly and the improvements to my make up application few people realize that I am the same person that they used to insult just twelve months ago.

It is not all one way though, not only did society have to learn about me and why I am different, I also had valuable lessons to learn from society. I think that one of the most important lessons was that I am not really the same person that people knew before, and therefore cannot expect the same treatment. Now I often stand in checkouts next to people from my old life and they fail to recognize me and sometimes do not want to recognize me. I have

learned that no matter how much I would like to speak to them and say hello, I must not make that move and remind them of who I was. I have become just another woman in the checkout line up and it feels good.

I am beginning to make some friends at last but not close friends, over time that may change though. Recently I was asked to talk to the teachers at our local high school, they wanted to know how to recognize children who were intersexual or transsexual, it was hard to make them understand that we do not come with labels on our foreheads and that we are very adept in hiding among the so called norm. The results of that talk was the school introduced a sex and gender counselling program that is designed for all youth from Gay to gender challenged and this program is now linked to a social worker that can help the child and his/her family understand the situation. I am very proud of this advance in a community that two years ago would have contemplated public stoning to death. It is still very unhealthy for me to venture out after dark or even go to a local bar for a drink, then again it is unhealthy for any woman to do those things in this day and age.

I learned not to chafe against the restraint placed upon the lives of women but to accept them in the same way that other women do and work with certain limitations. By being this way inclined, more women are accepting me as a woman and treating me as one of them. I am beginning to be a party to conversations among women that most men never knew existed. This is more acceptance than I dreamed about and it also feels so right. It's kind of like an us and them world between both genders and I am being taken slowly in with my own gender.

I went privately for my surgery and because I do not think there are set rules that apply to all transgender people, and hate the system that categorizes us as all the same and tries to have a conveyer belt treatment system for us. Each of us is different and requires individual treatment, the Harry Benjamin standards of care are completely obsolete and require updating so badly. The updating should be done by a mixed committee of doctors and transgender/transsexual people, therefore taking into account how the patients or subjects themselves feel about the treatments available. [This is happening now — Ed.]

I know that many of the doctors I have had to see have created great difficulties in me receiving treatment. I succeeded in going through with transition and surgery and I am happier now than I have ever been in my life, even though one finds daily living fraught with possible abuse and violence. Abuse and violence is the product of fear and lack of understanding also one can say others seeing the obvious differences. Only education for the general public and better treatment for us by the system can change that and give us safety and peace of mind. As long as places like the Jurassic Clarke institute are in operation, we will be treated as if we belong outside of society.

OK, I'm off my soap box now, but I have built up an anger within about the way gender challenged people are treated by the system and society. If I was born without a leg, medicare would see that I was able to walk with an artificial limb and treatment would be ongoing and without any prejudice but because I was born with split gender, my treatment is taboo and non-existent.

# Life in the Passing Lane

## *Coming to Terms with Being Read*

Lynn

Over the past few years and several hundred outings I have come to learn that being read does not always mean that you are "being read". First of all I think that if you look at me long enough, (e.g., at a restaurant,) you are going to figure out that I am a bio-boy in a dress. There you go, ego checked at the door. The looks that women get in public are different than the looks men tend to get. Most men are oblivious to women checking them out, but women are usually quite aware of men "gawking" at them as they move into their field of view. Just because you are looked at, does not necessarily mean a read. Looks can be appreciation, envy, noticing a handbag or jewelry, a blank stare or one of familiarity.

When I first started getting out in public I was convinced that everyone looking at me knew I was transgendered, but more and more I found that it was I that gave them that thought. In the gay community you get read by everyone, but if you go up to Yorkville it seems impolite to stare so people tend not to notice you as much. I recently had the good fortune of going to Pittsburgh for the Be All event, and a friend, Pam, and I headed to a large mall to shop. We were in a department store and I noticed a gal whisper something to another sales gal. I made a mental note…"read" and we walked on. Later that night I ran into the gals in a nightclub and she said that she had seen us in the store earlier that day. I mentioned that I had noticed her whispering to her friend and she said, "Yes, I saw you and mentioned to my friend, wouldn't you die for a butt like that." As I said, it is usually the TG who give the feeling to the public that there is something up.

I find that going to very straight mainstream places is easier because the people who end up there would never think that a TG would show up. I've found that the element of surprise can work to your advantage. Another anecdote; I was having dinner in a trendy spot on Queen St with 2 very straight friends and noticed a very beautiful TG a few tables over. I mentioned this to my friends and they refused to believe that a "queen" as they said would come to a fine restaurant like this. I could not convince them. That situation really made me think how many times that patrons of a café or shop gave me the benefit of the doubt thinking the same thing. Going to mainstream areas can be very scary for a TG starting out, but as you feel more and more comfortable I would suggest giving it a try. Last Friday night I had dinner with a friend at Spinnakers at Harbourfront with a friend. We ate outside on the patio and I noticed a gal giving me the once over. When I was first out I would of wanted to crawl under the table but I smiled back at her and noticed that she was checking out my outfit and my newly styled hair.

OK, so you're read, now what. You can do several things and a lot has to do with your comfort level and where you are when you get read. If it is in a public place, you can choose to smile or just remove yourself from the situation. A smile will do wonders for you and usually will be met with another smile. I have dropped my eyes in the past and hurried away, but I find that I always feel bad afterwards for acting like I am ashamed, so I usually tend to look the person in the eye and smile. If you are in a ladies room or a change room I would recommend leaving immediately as to not cause anyone embarrassment. I have never had a problem in a ladies room but always use caution when I'm in a bathroom. Remember another difference in a ladies bathroom is that women love to talk and check out the outfits, so if you're uncomfortable, go in, do your business and leave.

Remember that being a TG in public is not a crime. Hold your head up and be proud of who you are. With an attitude like that the public will not only tolerate you, but will probably embrace you.

# RuPaul a Go-Go

*by Jeffrey Al. Newman*
*The article originally appeared in Etcetera, 27 March, 1998RuPaul a Go-Go*

Andy Warhol once said that everyone gets their 15 minutes of fame. If that's true, then drag diva, TV and radio personality, author and singer RuPaul is on his ninth life. After 17 years in show business, the man who made "Supermodel" a number one dance tune, counseled Jan Brady on the silver screen, and made donning drag glamorous and chic, has far surpassed his 15 minutes and earned his place in the annals of pop culture.

The singer, performer, and author was honored this month as the 1998 recipient of the Gay and Lesbian American Music Awards' Out Music Award, which is given to an openly gay artist who has done extraordinary work in the entertainment industry. "It actually means more to me to get the Out Music Award, than any other award, because it comes from my gay brothers and sisters," says the 36-year-old performer and MAC Cosmetics spokesperson.

"In this world this is so masculine and male-based, where anything that goes against masculinity is put down, to be honored for what I've done is a real achievement, because it shows that people understand what it's like and what it means to go against the grain."

With a career based on gender bending, RuPaul, who currently hosts his own variety show on cable TV's VH1, is proud to be honored for breaking the stereotype and not limiting himself to society's designated male role. "Anyone who is pumping femininity or pre-fab femininity into society is a hero in my book," he says.

RuPaul has also just released "RuPaul's Go-Go Box Classics," a dance compilation on Rhino Records paying homage to his days as a club dancer.

"When I moved back to Atlanta in the early '80s, I was a go-go dancer [at Weekends] for two-and-a-half years. This album reflects that time in my life," says the singer, who hand picked each of the tunes on the set, including his recent duet with Martha Wash. "The CD is for people to go and be a go-go dancer at home. The songs are all tried and true classics, and not the same ones you hear on every other CD, either."

Born RuPaul Andre Charles in the early 1980s, international fame only found its way to the six-foot-seven diva after he released the drag anthem "Supermodel" in 1993. The single topped pop and dance charts around the world and made him a star. "The biggest difference between Andre and RuPaul is that off stage is that me off stage is much more Scorpio-istic and intense. I tend to be somewhat heavy and introverted," the singer/performer says.

"RuPaul on stage is ongoing, outrageous, very accessible. It's a balance for my Scorpioism. But RuPaul on stage is an act. Entertainment," he adds. "I'm much more subdued. I'm a man living a human life, which is very different from being a super human on stage.

"When you are on-stage you pump up the volume."

Since 1993, RuPaul has released three full-length CDs- "Supermodel of the World," "Foxy Lady," and last year's successful Christmas opus, "Ho, Ho, Ho." He scored four top 10 dance hits, including 1997's number one smash, "It's Raining Men- The Sequel," a remake of the disco camp version with Martha Wash.

He also hosted his own morning radio show on New York's WKTU for two years. He recently resigned from the job to begin work on a syndicated radio show, which is expected to launch this summer by Chancellor Media, the same company that owns WKTU.

"Ten years ago I was in L.A., with holes in my shoes, wishing that ne day my name would be on a billboard on Sunset Boulevard," he says. "Today my picture is up there. I feel like I have finally made it."

In his 1995 autobiography, "Letting It All Hang Out," the Rumeister offered an eclectic look as his accession to fame. From his dysfunctional relationship with his mother (whom he affectionately calls Mean Mrs. Charles) and his father, to his drug use (LSD was a regular dietary supplement between ages 20 and 30) to his days as a go-go dancer, RuPaul literally let it all hang out.

The darkest time in his life came when he turned 28. "I had just moved to New York from Los Angeles and couldn't get arrested to save my life. I had no money, no real place to stay. I was still doing the drugs. My sister had kicked me out of her house. It was a pretty dark time," the singer recalls. "I thought about committing suicide, but I never came close to doing it. I knew that if I just hung tight and kept the faith, that I would get through it. I knew change was coming, and I just had to hold on."

As for the future, RuPaul has no plans to slow down or retire the wig and pumps. (For those who can't get enough, he'll be forever immortalized in wax at the soon-to-open Madame Tussaud Wax Museum in New York.) With nearly a-half-a-dozen films, including Spike Lee's "Crooklyn," "The Brady Bunch," and "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar," RuPaul hopes to explore more of his thespian side. In June he will be seen in the made-for-television movie "An Unexpected Life," with Stockard Channing on the USA Network.

RuPaul says, while being a celebrity has been great, he's never worried about losing his 15-minutes of fame. "Even if I had been a one-hit wonder, I'd still be working, I'd still have ideas and aspirations, and I'd see my inspiration come to light," he says. "Success is something that is between you and yourself. The most important thing is for you to love and adore yourself. That is true success. I've accomplished that. So, with or without the fame, I've been successful."

# A Mitzvah In Woodstock,

Callan Williams, 17 August 1998

[In the Jewish tradition a boy celebrates his bar Mitzvah, his coming of age, at 13, and a girl celebrates her Bat Mitzvah at the same age. The celebration can, however, take place at any time after the 13th birthday — Ed.]

When, as you walk into the big, open space, log cabin building on the outskirts of Woodstock, under the clippings from the New York Times about this congregation and it's folk-singing rabbi you see a four page article in Hebrew from an Israeli paper with a full page picture, you know this isn't going to be any ordinary Bat Mitzvah.

It was Rachel Pollack's Bat Mitzvah on August 15, 1998, exactly 40 years after her bar mitzvah, that caused the media attention, even comparing Rachel to Dana International, the transsexual superstar who won the big Eurovision song contest for Israel this spring. Rachel, now 53 years old, dressed in a flowing purple dress befitting an aging hippie, an earth mother, may not look like Dana, but they share a history. Both were born male and chose to change the gender of their lives, living as women, and also choosing to have surgery to change their bodies into a more female function.

Rachel's surgery was in the 1970s. She recalls that after it, she gave the Jewish prayer "Blessed is God, who has not made me a woman," and then added her own twist "Double blessed is Dr. Lamaker, who has." Rachel has walked far from her roots in those years, from New York to Amsterdam, from Judaism to a Mythical based spirituality, but that circle has brought her back to here, back to her roots, in "the great spiral of life" as she says.

The Woodstock Jewish Congregation is as open and embracing as this hippie enclave can be. Their leader, Rabbi Jonathan Kligler, has his own CD for sale, a picture of him, looking like nothing more than a smiling dentist with a an open face and a guitar on the cover. Jonathan, as everyone calls him, welcomes the crowd with a call for them to find and celebrate their "uid" during worship, the gifts that God has given them that make them special. "We are blessed when special people come to join us, bringing their unique gifts, because we gain and grow from those gifts."

The gathering today, perched on folding metal chairs arrayed in a semi circle around the ark, covers a lot of ground. There are the regular worshippers from the congregation, people who came on this August Saturday morning just to worship their God. There is the family of Rachel, bothers and sisters, nieces and nephews, here to celebrate a special day in a life. There are Rachel's friends from her life in the Hudson Valley, artists and friends, who are here to wish her well.

And there are the tall women, scattered here and there, some of whom have driven from as far as Baltimore to be here today. These are Rachel's sisters, women who have started their life as males, made gender changes in their life. There is even a man here who started his life as female, here with his beautiful girlfriend. They are accepted here by the people who have accepted Rachel into their life, thinking today about the challenges faced in the return of the gifts they have found on their quests, and if they will ever come to a day when they will be full circle, back in a place where they again find a feeling of home.

In the blessing over the Torah, Rachel invites three groups up. The first is a woman raised in an Orthodox Jewish home who has never got to say the blessing over the torah, even though all her brothers have, and Rachel tells us that to her, this woman represents all of those who have felt left out, dissociated from the traditions of life.

Her family comes up, a great gathering of people, some who knew Rachel as a boy child and an adult woman, but more children, who have only known Aunt Rachel. Later, they will speak of the role Rachel has played in their family, how she has been there as a catalyst and supporter, being a key part of the structure as she brings a bit of unconventional wisdom, magic and deep caring that has enriched all of their lives.

The last up are Chelsea Godwin and Kate Bornstein, two transgendered women both over 6 feet tall, who come up, donning prayer shawls, to read the blessing over the Torah. They stand, tall and proud, back in a tradition that they have both left, and yet is sewn deep into their hearts. "The last time I read Hebrew was when I was 20," says Chelsea later, "and I don't want to tell you how long ago that was." Chelsea today, her close cropped red hair sporting a ridge that stands straight up over dramatically penciled in arched eyebrows.

For Kate, this is the first Jewish service that she has been to since the funeral of her mother, a tale she wrote of for the New York Times Magazine. She jokes when Rachel announces that these women represent an ancient tradition of gynemimetic shamans who walk between worlds and speak for the power of connection and transformation—"I'm not that ancient!" she quips. These two women, who might have been priestesses in some other place and time, are full of a transfomative spirit, one that Rachel also manifests in the world, and the image of the three of them standing together, reading the words that are deep in the traditions of their childhood, so far from home and so close, is very powerful.

As the Bat Mitzvah girl, Rachel spoke of what the lessons of the Torah reading meant to her. She talked of her journey and how it was both the presence of this embracing congregation and the understanding that it was not only acceptable, but good to argue over the meaning of the word contained in the Torah that brought her back. She told stories of Jewish teachers in the great tradition of questioning, journeying and debating to find the true meaning of God in an individuals life.

Rachel spoke of love, the key of the golden rule that encourages us to love our neighbors as we would be loved, of the call to hospitality towards strangers, and the call to love God. It was the spiral of love that bought Rachel back here, back to a tradition she had walked away from, to give the gifts of her journey, her "uid" and it was the community that accepted those gifts that she was becoming a member of today.

As the gathering sang and danced, shaking the maracas, banging the drums and tapping the tambourines that had been passed out, it was a celebration of life, of community, and of a homecoming that demanded both the journey of a lifetime and the embrace of home. The great crowd overwhelmed the caterer, but people ate with energy and joy, sharing music and delight.

It was this service, so simple and so common, so unique and so groundbreaking, that had triggered newspaper features halfway around the world. It was little different than any other bat mitzvah at the Woodstock Jewish Congregation, which often welcomes adults coming into the faith, but it was very special and powerful, marked by the presence of the tall women who have journey far, but often been unable to find a home.

A mitzvah is a good deed, a gift, often to a

# *Transsexuals lose Euro court fight*

Electronic Telegraph, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/

TWO transsexuals who were born male and underwent sex-change operations in their forties lost a long battle yesterday to be recognised in English law as women.

The European Court of Human Rights ruled that the Government had not breached the rights of Kristina Sheffield and Rachel Horsham, both 52, by denying them new birth certificates showing that they were female. The court also upheld, by 18 votes to two, the Government's right to prevent Miss Sheffield and Miss Horsham from marrying men. It ruled that marriage may legitimately be restricted under national laws to a union between a man and a woman "of biological origin".

But the 20 judges who decided the case reprimanded the Government for not reviewing national laws on transsexuals as the court had advised after a previous case in 1990. A statement issued yesterday said: "Given the increased social acceptance of transsexualism and the increased recognition of the problems which post-operative transsexuals encounter, the court reiterated that contracting states need to keep the area under review."

After the ruling, Miss Sheffield, a former airline pilot named Ian, and Miss Horsham, who is living in Amsterdam with a man she wants to marry, said that despite their disappointment, the fight to win a better deal for transsexuals would continue. A statement read by their lawyer said: "Ms Sheffield and Ms Horsham take heart from the fact that there are currently at least another three cases raising the appalling treatment received by transsexuals under English law which will come to be considered by the new Court of Human Rights, which takes over on Nov 1 this year."

Both transsexuals had accused the Government of sexual discrimination and of violating their rights to privacy, to marry and to establish a family. They complained to the Human Rights Commission, which advises the court, that the determination of gender on the basis of "biological indicators" which existed at birth, was unjustified socially, medically and scientifically. A High Court ruling in 1970 laid down that sex is determined at birth.

Miss Sheffield and Miss Horsham argued that, as certain official documents require presentation of a birth certificate, they had been obliged to identify themselves in public as male - a gender they had renounced - causing "profound hurt and embarrassment".

But the court found that "disclosure" of their original sex had been justified in the cases they had cited. It added that such public declarations were not frequent enough "to impinge to a disproportionate extent on their right to respect for their private lives".

Before her operation Miss Sheffield, of Ealing, west London, married and fathered a daughter, served in the RAF and in the Rhodesian Air Force and was awarded the Silver and Bronze Cross for bravery. She was given a passport and driving licence in her new name after she completed sex re-assignment surgery in 1988. But her birth certificate and social security records state that she is a man.

As a precondition of undergoing the surgery, she says that she had to divorce her wife, Julia, who subsequently gained a court order to prevent Miss Sheffield having access to their child. Because of this, she has not seen her daughter for more than 12 years. According to Miss Sheffield, the judge granted the order on the grounds that contact with a transsexual would not be in the child's interests.

Before the case she said: "No one chooses to be like this. I didn't suddenly wake up one morning and say, 'I wonder what it feels like being a girl'. I'm angry with the way I've been treated and the way transsexuals have been treated."

Miss Horsham, who had surgery in 1992, has been living in Amsterdam since 1974. She says that she was forced abroad because she wants to marry her boyfriend. They plan to do this in Holland where the law recognises transsexuals. She has already been issued with a birth certificate showing her new name and sex by the Register of Births in the Hague, but a request to the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys in England to amend her original birth certificate was rejected.

Yesterday's judgment by the court, which is based in Strasbourg, France, made clear that English law, which prevents marriages between people who were of the same sex at birth, did not contravene Article 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights. This states that: "Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right."

The Government contended that the human rights code did not require legal recognition of new sexual identity and that any inconvenience did not amount to a denial of rights.

**Euro Court**

## ROBERTS' RULES: CROSS DRESSER

*by Shelly Roberts*

Your jaw would have dropped into your corsage too.

A.D. wore a dress to the dance!

I don't know A.D. all that well. We nod at each other at parties and board meetings. We'd have the same conversation every time. You could push the tape recorder on our old conversation and the voice print would give you an exact match.

"Hey."

"Hey."

"How's work?"

"Great."

"How's writing."

"Great."

(Meeting Version:) "Fund Raising on the agenda, tonight?"

"What else?."

(Party Version:) "I'd skip the herring and peanut butter pate."

"Good thought."

AD isn't her real name. Not even close. Not Anna Diane. Or Alice Denise. Not even Angel Darling left behind in some romantic aftermath. Rumor has it it stands for "Absolute Dyke." It's all I've ever called her.

We're not chest-to-chest chums, but we're so consistently at the same functions that you can feel a difference in the room temperature if one of us is missing. But even if she weren't in the room, with AD, you always knew who she would have been if she showed up: A lesbian in pants. A six-to-eight on the B side of the Butch/Femme scale.

Not a stereotype. No jeans belted under beer belly. No leather jacket and Harley listing to port in the ladies' bar parking lot. Just Yuppie dressed to the nines. A corporate type who always made drag seem like fashion. Or the other way around. Expensive. Tailored. Pleated wool pants. Silk Shirts. Blazers. Could fit in just fine at a client meeting or a committee meeting.

Last Holiday Dinner she wore a 3 piece man's suit. Shirt and tie. It was New York fashion that particular instant. So you could tell it wasn't about doing anybody's impersonation. Just AD unleashing her Amex card in Lord & Taylor, in her wicked idea of irony. She could walk the edge of Fashion Plaza without either climbing into cliché or engendering dyke derision, and get away with it.

But, of course, she always did it in pants.

Then she wore a dress to the dance.

What else can I tell you? Oh, of course. About the divorce. AD was suddenly single. So that must have had something to do with the make-over. Still, it didn't fully explain the dress. It wasn't something she just happened to find in the back of the closet, saved for Congressional confirmation hearings or anything. Definitely not anything you'd expect to see on Janet Reno.

It was red. And it made the pheromones fly. Cut up to the knees, and down way below caution. It actually swirled. Everybody could see AD had legs. And make-up. Something different about the hair. Perfume, without the faintest evanescence of eau to Brut. And an electric smile in the on position, studied in the back pages of Penthouse. It made whole parts of normally immune people, suddenly pointy.

I've only seen it once before. A long time ago at an LA party when I'd been out for mere minutes. Elsie was the butchest lady I'd met in my six months of active observation. I had lots of time to watch and learn what it was that I was expected to be if I were planning to be a lesbian when I grew up. I watched Elsie. And her steady stream of ultra-eyelashed beauties. She ranked right up there on the scale in the eight-nine's. She was lighting cigarettes left and right, opening doors, and dancing forwards till hell wouldn't have it.

Then Francoise strode in the door from Paris. "Butch" defined by Cary Grant and Natalie Barnie. A lady I'd read about in books I had to go into bad parts of town to buy. When she passed, your shoelaces melted. So did Elsie 's body language. Her hips widened. Breasts pushed a little outer. Shoulders tilted and eyes did a perfect Lauren Bacall. She extracted a Marlboro, and offered it up for sacrifice to Francoise's silver Dunhill. It was a ritual dance between two old never-been lovers. A tease. An unfulfilled flirt. Its transformation took seconds. The shock of watching it lasted my lifetime. Then Francoise surged into the next room, and Elsie's body settled squarely back onto her stolid hips, swagger restored. And I removed my jaw from my scotch glass.

It was the kind of transformation I thought of when I saw AD flow onto the dance floor in that dress. The red one. Cut above the knee and plunging open to all the possibilities.

Married ladies more than subtly escorted mates in the other direction , out of harm's way just in case. Women you knew who never acted that way, blushed deep into their cowboy shirts and drifted closer.

AD had had an amazing clothes-change operation.

I began to wonder where I could get a dress like that.

And if I wore it to a dance, whether my friends would be so surprised.

© 1997 Shelly Roberts. All rights reserved. May be commercially reprinted only in its entirety with written permission.

Shelly Roberts is an internationally syndicated columnist, and the author of the new best-selling Roberts' Rules of Lesbian Break Ups. (Spinsters Ink.)

## CHATSUBO

By JoAnne Roberts

"Nothing is as terrible to see as ignorance in action." -- Goethe

Dr. Ray Blanchard of the Clarke Institute, Toronto, Canada, has a novel idea about what motivates some MtF crossdressers to have genital reassignment surgery (GRS). Such males, he says, are sexually attracted to the idea of themselves as women. He calls his concept "autogynephilia," an extreme form of heterosexual cross-dressing. Instead of being sexually aroused simply by the thought of wearing feminine clothing, an autogynephile is aroused by the thought of wearing a feminine body. It is, Blanchard thinks, a kind of fetishism—a projection of the libido onto an atypical object or idea. There is some research done by transgender physician Anne Lawrence that supports this idea. The theory goes a long way to explain the startling large number of trans-people who present for surgery and seems to nicely dovetail with Dr. Richard Docter's notion of the "secondary transsexual." [See article in this issue — Ed.]

Maybe Blanchard's theory has something to do with this next story by Natalie Angier appearing in the August 31 New York Times. Recent scientific research has found that the popularity of some male icons, like Leonardo Dicaprio, has more to do with their femininity than their masculinity. Women are more attracted to men with feminized faces than to men with more stereotypically rugged, manly faces. The scientists had predicted that women would be most attracted to "traditional hallmarks of male dominance and maturity," such as a large jaw, squared-off face, heavy brow. Instead, they found women to be attracted to men with "a touch of girlishness," as in a slender nose, lightened brow, etc. One of the researchers said when they first encountered the "feminine preference" no one believed it so they kept doing their surveys over and over with the same result.

Dr. Lawrence presented her research at the Second International Congress on Sex and Gender in 1997. I've heard from Dr. Stephen Whittle that the Third International Congress on Sex & Gender (ICSG) was a smashing success. As such,

I'm looking forward to the Renaissance Transgender Association hosting the Fourth Congress here in Philadelphia in 2000. The event has the "blessing" of the Center for Sex Research at the California State University at Northridge and Dr. James Elias, the Center's Executive Director. Dr. Elias along with Dr. Vern Bullough were responsible for the First Congress in 1995. Renaissance was the sponsor of the Second Congress. Meanwhile, I've been told that the Fifth and Sixth Congresses are in the planning stages. The Fifth Congress will be held in Australia in 2001 and the Sixth will go back to Manchester, England, in 2002. So, it looks like the ICSG will be an annual event. (By the way, congratulations go out to Dr. Bullough on his recent remarriage. His first wife, Dr. Bonnie Bullough, passed away in 1996.) You heard it on TGForum first! A new IFGE controversy is brewing around nominations for the Virginia Prince (VP) Award. Some think that the VP and Trinity awards are "tilted" toward the IFGE "faithful," thus diluting the importance of the awards. Joan Goodnight of the Powder Puffs of California reports she was asked to withdraw a nomination she'd made for the VP award. You may remember that I mentioned the great job Linda and Cynthia Phillips had done at the joint Cal Dreamin'/IFGE convention in Long Beach in 1997. Well, the Phillips have volunteered at all of the Cal Dreamin' events and Goodnight nominated them for both the Virginia Prince award and a Trinity Award. Goodnight later received a letter from Winnie Brant (IFGE Nominations/Awards Chair) asking her to withdraw the Phillips from consideration for the VP award. Brant's exact words were, "When I receive nominations of the same people for both awards, I usually ask the nominator(s) to reconsider; especially if the nominee has not previously received a Trinity award. I suggest that the VP nomination be withdrawn." Goodnight has not withdrawn either nomination. I did not know that you had to get a Trinity before getting the VP. Goodnight thinks the message is clear—outsiders need not apply, the [IFGE] minds are already made up. I agree with her. The whole IFGE award process is upside down. Anyone can nominate anyone for a VP or Trinity, but only the IFGE "academy" can vote on who gets the award, and the member list of the academy is closely held. By the way, Linda and Cynthia went way beyond the call of duty at that conference and deserve some sort of recognition by IFGE.The most curious thing happened. The Arts & Entertainment (A&E) cable channel produced an hour-long Investigative Report titled the Transgender Revolution. The piece was supposed to document the rising transgender civil rights movement. Prior to airing, there was a tremendous amount of hype about the show. The week before the air date, I received at least one email message a day urging me to watch the show. Okay, so I watched the show and then... Nothing. There hasn't been a single word about the show on the net or in any of several expected venues. What happened? Well, here's my take. IR host Bill Kurtis did an excellent job of presenting transgender issues in an non-sensational, non-prejudicial manner. The show covered both transgendered and transsexual people, including several FtMs. I thought the section featuring TOPS (Transgendered Officers Protect & Serve) founder, Tony Baretto-Neto was outstanding. Also, the section featuring Nancy Nangeroni was also extremely well-done. Nancy's sister is to be commended for exposing herself to criticism while coming out in support of her transgendered sibling. Overall, the show was very well done as far as it went. And that is my main criticism; it didn't go far enough. There were no transvestite/crossdressers shown as part of the tg rights movement. That alone was a major tactical error on the part of the people involved in the preparation of the special. Several very prominent community activists were conspicuous by their absence. They weren't mentioned by the activists on-screen leading one to believe those on-screen may have started the movement, which is not the case. Ah well, those who led the way did so because it was the right thing to do; not because they expected any glory. Last month Parents, Families and Friends of Gays and Lesbians (PFLAG) voted over- whelmingly to include transgendered people in the group's mission statement. here are some follow-up details—PFLAG's By-laws now read: "The purpose of this Corporation shall be: To promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons..." A special interest group within the organization, The Transgender Special Outreach Network (TSON), was directly responsible for the trans-inclusion statement. Network members met several years ago at a PFLAG conference. Network Chair Mary Boenke said the group looks forward to helping PFLAG members work toward providing the same kind of critical support on behalf of trans-people that they have always provided for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. "We're pleased and excited. We've been working for this trans-inclusion resolution for 3 years. It's a benchmark of a long process that has just begun. We passed the law; now the work of education begins." It's official—there will be a convention put on by the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) despite postings on the Internet to the contrary. While meeting at Southern Comfort 98, the IFGE Board of Directors responded to many community members urging them not to abandon the annual conference. As a result, the board has allowed BoD members, Alison Laing and S. Kristine James to take full financial and operational responsibility for a conference to be held in Louisville, Kentucky on March 17-21, 1999. The Blue Grass Belles (Ky.), along with the Tennessee Vals (Tenn.), IXE (Ind.), Crossport (Ohio), and local GLB organizations will act as local hosts. The convention will include a Transgender Health & Wellness conference and will try to reinstate the Congress of Transgender Organizations. The Belles are planning to host several entertaining evening events as well as sponsor several professional gender specialists who have not previously been presenters at other national events. For more information write or call: IFGE Convention, P.O. Box 61, Easton, PA 18044-0061, 610-759-2347. The recent murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming brings sharp focus on the issue of hate crimes. According to one source in New York city, since May at least four, and possibly as many as seven, gay and trans-people have been killed in Greenwich Village. Of the four confirmed to be bias murders, two of the four people were trans-identified. Trans-activists Rosalyn Blumenstein and Carrie Davis of the Gender Identity Project explained that some people in our community: "...are particularly at risk because they are often homeless, economically marginalized, and sometimes sex workers at a time when [New York City] is waging a 'quality of life' battle against street people." Other activists say the recent rise in hate crimes stems from theocratic, religious-right, anti-gay rhetoric. That seems to be the case for Shepard who was beaten and left to die tied to a fence because he was openly gay. We all need to be vigilant and work for protecting ourselves from hate crimes. Don't think because you live in a big city like Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York that it can't happen to you. On to fashion news... technology comes to the rescue. Throw away your eyelash curler 'cause now your mascara will do the job instead. After coating the tops of the lashes, they will curl themselves. Maybe not quite as much as with a mechanical curler, but enough. L'oreal was the first with Le Grand Curl, but by now all the lines will have one. Try Maybelline's WonderCurl. Most stores are having trouble keeping these self-curlers in stock. Here's the perfect product for crossdressers too scared to venture out of the house to go shopping. ModaCAD (1-800-757-7707) has announced the release of the FashionTrip CD-ROM. Here's a description from their web site: "This interactive CD-ROM is the first of its kind — a revolu-

tionary, interactive, personalized fashion consultant. It's jam-packed with fun features like a virtual dressing room, personal fashion profile, and an Internet Phone Book that links you to other fashion web sites. It also includes the latest in music videos, movie trailers and fashion shows. Try on clothes, chat with friends or shop on-line!" Someone who actually saw the software demonstrated says you can scan or import a picture of yourself into the computer, and it will dress you in your choice of the latest of designer fashions. When new collections are introduced, you will be able to update your software via the internet. Sounds pretty cool to me. I went to their web site and signed up for a free demo CD. Seventeen magazine plans to bind the CD right onto the cover of a Fall issue (I don't know which one). I have also seen ads for the software in the October issue of Mademoiselle. I've also heard there is a new version of Cosmopolitan Virtual Makeover (same idea as FashionTrip for hair and makeup), and that an Essence Virtual Makeover will be available soon for African American girls.

Here's the latest in fashion from the Washington, D.C., scene; a 100% all cotton navy blue t-shirt lets everybody know where you stand on the issue of sex in The White House. With "Summer Intern, The White House" printed on the left breast, and the "mark" (aka "the stain") of the President on the right shoulder, you may very well be mistaken for one of Bill's hand-picked interns! (Hey, I haven't come across your face before.) The novelty t-shirts are being hawked by DLF Authentics, 8325 N Michigan Road, Box 326 Indianapolis, IN 46268-3635, 317-592-1319 (voice mail) and leave order and credit card information. Shirts are $20 (U.S. Funds) for the first shirt and $15 for each additional shirt thereafter, which includes shipping and handling ($20 for 1, $35 for 2, $50 for 3, etc.) Orders will be processed within 3 to 5 business days and shipped within the United States via USPS Priority Mail.

Everyone thought that Laser Hair Removal was the ultimate answer in depilatories. As it turns out, it's not. It's pretty good, but not permanent by any means. Now comes word of another method using... microwaves. Now, don't run off and shove your head in your kitchen unit. The new technique uses special waveguides to direct the energy to the hair, while the skin's surface is chilled with a coolant to keep from being scorched. In animal studies conducted by the Microwave Medical Corp., in Scottsdale, Ariz., hair follicles were nuked in one shot and no hair regrew after several months. Larger studies are required for Food and Drug Administration approval, but the technique looks very promising. Is the day of the "supermodel" over? Could be. Several of the fashion mags have started using celebrity women on their covers rather than the supermodels we've gotten so used to. Marie Claire for the last two months have used non-models on its covers. The October issued featured Julianna Margulies, while the November issue features Sandra Bullock. Last month, Top Model magazine, which featured only supermodels, folded after just three years on the street. I've got the issue that featured Cindy Crawford, complete with an untouched photo of her face. Maybe it will become a collectible now that the mag has died. So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I thought tg civil rights were for everyone. Comments? Write care of this publication or email them to CyberQueen@cdspub.com. © 1998 by JoAnn Roberts ____


# Subscribe to TMR Today!

The **Monarch** : Canada's Transgender Reader is provided free of charge to all *Xpressions* members.
Non-members who wish to receive TMR can subscribe.
The cost in Canada is $30 in Canadian funds.
In the US, the cost is $30 in US funds.

Outside North America the cost is CAN$50.
Send your subscription to:

**Xpressions**
**P.O Box 223, Station "A" Toronto, Ont. M5W 1B2**
**Voice Mail 416-410-6949**

I want to subscribe to **TMR**. ☐
Better yet, I want to join *Xpressions*. ☐
The Annual Memebership is $50.00 CND.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS:_____

CITY: _____

PROV./ STATE _____

COUNTRY:_____

POSTAL CODE:_____

# Deuteronomy

*Reflections on Deuteronomy 22:5*
*Laura Stone, 1997*
*(email: mmsle@aol.com)*

Those of us transgendered folks that were raised in the Judeo-Christian tradition and observe our religions are often particularly vexed by Deuteronomy 22:5 because this verse is a prohibition against cross dressing. In 1996, Everett Fox published a new translation and commentary on Deuteronomy. The publisher is the Jewish Publication Society, a well respected press in Jewish religious circles. This work brings together the results of contemporary biblical research to provide the most up to date source on this book. The English translation of Deut. 22:5 reads: "A woman must not put on man's apparel, nor shall a man wear woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is abhorrent to the Lord your God." The original Hebrew, however, is not so simple and straightforward to translate as this English rendition may suggest.

Our translations today are based on older translations but also incorporate the results of very detailed research that seeks to clear up confusion and inconsistencies. Such research, for example, uses cross comparison of word usage in the Old Testament, other Semitic languages and different ancient versions as a means to "discover" the most "accurate" version. Periodically there are archaeological discoveries like the Dead Sea Scrolls that produce new information. In effect, scholars are constantly re-inventing the text. As you would expect, some religious authorities do not subscribe to such "tampering" and adhere to traditionally accepted translations. But, how do they know that similar "tampering" did not take place in earlier eras before strict controls were instituted for checking copies, resolving inconsistencies and controlling editorial license?

Fox addresses a major translation problem with the verse. The sentence is divided into three parts. The first uses the word keh-li, which, in Fox's translation, is "apparel." But, it turns out that keh-li is one of those inconsistent words. A literal translation of the first part of the sentence is "a man's keh-li may not be on a woman." In rabbinical Hebrew, the plural of keh-li means "clothing." But, scholars are not sure that it meant clothing in this verse because in the earlier biblical Hebrew keh-li normally meant "implement, vessel," and even "weapon." In the long history of commentary that forms the oral law of Judaism called "halakhah," both translations of the word were combined. In other words, when in doubt, the rabbis took the most conservative inclusive approach and came to the conclusion that in Fox's words: "women may not wear armor, clothing, hairdos or other adornments that are characteristic of men nor may men wear what is characteristic of women." Fox does not address the translation of the second part of the sentence. That part does not use the word keh-li at all. Two other words related to clothing are found there instead.

Does a debate about the specific words and meanings really matter? Well, yes. Regardless of the translation one chooses, there is clearly a difference between the prohibition against "cross dressing" by women than the one against "cross dressing" by men. The words are different. In fact, regardless of whether the text we have is the original or a later revision, it appears that the intent may have been to prevent a more significant social transgression for women than simply wearing the "wrong" clothes. The idea may have been to prevent women from using weapons and participating in certain religious rituals. Moreover, understanding the options makes it very clear that attitudes and beliefs about masculinity and femininity are incorporated in the writing and in the translation by the way choices in wording are made. Who had the authority to make those choices? You know the answer to that — men.

We cannot have a full understanding of this verse without considering the reasons for its inclusion in the Old Testament. The prohibition does not show up anywhere else in the biblical writings, and reasons are not given in the text itself other than the last part of the verse which seems to be less of a reason than an admission that the reason is not known. Fox lists the different reasons that have been given for the prohibition. He draws these from commentaries of rabbis and sages through the ages. Some of these reasons come from the Talmud, a compilation of the oral law of Judaism set down in writing after the destruction of the First Temple. It also includes reasons drawn from later commentaries. Some commentators believe that prohibiting cross-dressing reduces the possibility of using disguise to pursue illicit sexual encounters. Others focus on the fact that cross-dressing blurs sexual differences created by God and thus those that practice it are rejecting God's wisdom. A third reason is that it is considered a means of sexual stimulation and homosexual role playing, both considered perverse by traditional authorities. Finally, since cross dressing was practiced as a part of certain pagan rites and magical practices of the time it can be argued that it was considered not fit for the monotheistic and more "rational" practices of Judaism (the temple prostitute argument).

The need to distinguish Jewish ritual observance from pagan or magic rituals clearly has little meaning today. But, there are still the other arguments. Illicit sexual intercourse (adultery), homosexuality and sexual stimulation (masturbation) are addressed in other places in the Old Testament in much more significant ways. All these seem to be an indirect means, on the part of the religious establishment, to link cross-dressing to the other prohibited practices. They do not form a convincing argument; rather, they seem to indicate that the sages were trying to find a strong reason for a relatively innocent activity, a reason that would stay relevant through the ages. Again, if we remember that it was men who wrote these commentaries, their emphasis on these concerns can be understood as a manifestation of what Sandra Lipsitz Bem calls the "Lens of Androcentrism." Cross-dressing, from their perspective, could be used as a means of sneaking in and out to fool around with someone's wife, or, by a gay male, to trick a naive heterosexual into making love like the story of M. Butterfly. In other words, they were concerned about the specific impact that cross-dressing may have had on their own lives or the lives of their

peers.

To me, the only reason that seems to make sense not only in the context of the time it was written but also through the ages is that cross dressing blurs sexual differences created by God. To me, this is the key issue that needs to be addressed. And, of course, it is a central focus of almost all discussions about transgendered behaviors of all sorts. It is another way of saying "boys and girls are different, why mess things up?" Moreover, it is consistent with many other prohibitions related to difference. Judaism puts a strong emphasis on distinctions, separations and boundaries. There are many prohibitions about what food should not be eaten, what crops not to plant next to each other, even what textile materials not to weave together. How many Jews and Christians today know that there is a major prohibition in the Old Testament about mixing wool with linen in a garment? In short, the authors of the Old Testament (many believe that God was the only "author") found ways to make distinctions — many, many ways. Thus, to put Deuteronomy 22:5 in perspective, the Old Testament says it is a "sin" to wear a garment of these prohibited mixtures of yarn as well as one that is reserved for the opposite sex.

One can raise questions about what constitutes the "dress" of a woman or the "clothing of a man." Fox actually follows his commentary quoted above with a parenthetical remark that I saved for last because it is so TG friendly: "(what is characteristic of each sex is defined by local practice)." Why would Fox, and the relatively conservative Jewish Publication Society include this statement? In fact, why would they use the term "characteristic" at all?

The TG community tends to see cross-dressing as primarily a man's problem because biological men and MtF TS's make up the visible majority. We argue that today women can wear practically anything that men wear without censure. A recent fad for combat boots and ads showing women wearing men's briefs are the latest example of the lack of limits. But, the history of cross-dressing demonstrates that, in the past, it was usually women who were most severely restricted in dress. In fact, the position of the prohibition against gender transgression by females is first in order, indicating that it is viewed as a more important a concern in the Old Testament and, as described above, the interpretation is more inclusive, giving women less freedom of action than men.

In Orthodox Judaism, there are still many restrictions on women's dress. In fact, because of liberalization in contemporary women's fashions, the major focus in Deuteronomy 22:5 for Jews should be the first part of the verse, not the second. When a genetic Jewish woman wears men's jeans or a unisex t-shirt, is she committing a sin? Does a young Jewish girl break the prohibition when she wears a baseball hat in a little league game or even when she picks up the bat (a male implement)? Does a female Israeli soldier break the commandment when she puts on her uniform and takes up her weapon?

Once we recognize the wide-ranging implications of contemporary fashions, life styles and customs for this prohibition, we can understand why the author used the language he did and why the Society published it. If we were to take it literally, as typically translated, practically all Jewish women in the world today who wore men's jeans, t-shirts, shoes and watches would be constantly breaking the prohibition. So would all the women serving in the armed forces and doing other jobs (with implements and vessels) that used to be only for males. This includes people like Ruth Ginsberg, Barbara Streisand and Dianne Feinstein.

Today, none of the examples above would be considered a sin except to ultra-Orthodox Jews (a small but growing minority) who restrict women to only the most traditional gender roles. Fox's parenthetical remark recognizes that what is "characteristic" of men and women changes from place to place and from time to time. Women's and men's apparel are social constructions. The problem for genetic male cross dressers is that men's fashions are not nearly so liberal as women's. Few men wear skirts, lace panties or padded bras.

Rather than taking it literally, we should view the detailed prohibitions in the Old Testament as symbolic of a larger, more abstract concept that still does make sense in religious practice. There is a need for distinctions and boundaries that give us a clear sense of right and wrong, in other words a moral code to live by. Cross-dressing, or for that matter, altering one's body chemistry or appearance, or being in love with someone of the same biological sex should not be targets for moral indignation because they blur "natural" distinctions created by God. Today we know that there are many psychological, social and even biological reasons for these behaviors. They are as "natural" as everything else that people have habitually done throughout the history of the species. We're just learning more about why we do them.

There should be no anxiety or guilt in rejecting Deuteronomy 22:5. Rather, all spiritual people should focus on the important distinctions, the lessons we really have to learn ourselves and teach our children. These are distinctions like knowing what is love and what is hate; knowing what is honesty and what is deceit, knowing what nurtures life and what destroys it. Deuteronomy 22:5 and other prohibitions like it were important at the birth of the Jewish people; they may have helped to insure that Jews would not be enticed into diluting their religion with practices associated closely with pagan cults. Indeed, they may have helped create the consistency and predictability in daily life necessary to insure the stability and survival of a fragile minority although certainly at a high price for many individuals. But, today those reasons are no longer valid. Cross-dressing is not a practice of competing religions and we know that it does not have to be a threat to families or communities.

I like to think that Deuteronomy 22:5 now has value as a test of spirituality. Throughout history people have been led astray from the ideals of religion by fanatically following rules with little spiritual significance. In fact, far too much killing and hatred has resulted from the blind adherence to rules instead of ideals. Maybe the rules are just there to test our ability to put ideals ahead of dogma?

**PERHAPS WE CAN HELP.**

CDS has been publishing educational information for the transgendered community like,Coping With Crossdressing, and the transsexual's Survival Guides since 1985. We offer over 40 publications and video's and we turn around orders in 48 hours or less. Write for a free catalog or visit our online store on the internet.

# CREATIVE DESIGN SERVICES

***Your Information Source For The Next Millennium!***

Voice: 610•640•9449 Fax: 610•648•0257
P.O. Box 61263 King of Prussia PA USA 19406
info@cdspub.com • www.cdspub.com